

# THE SAINTS













# The Saints



JOAN OF ARC



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# JOAN OF ARC

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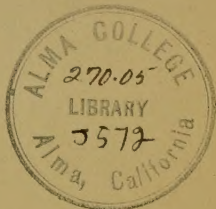
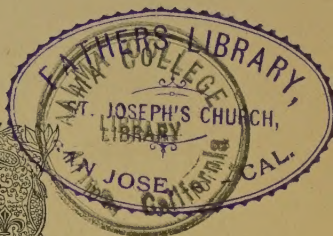
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# JOAN OF ARC

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## CHAPTER I

### CHILDHOOD

THE life of Joan of Arc has been written by eminent historians, and in these pages it is not our intention to attempt afresh that which has been already well done by them. We shall only recall in a summary manner the political and military events which composed her wonderful history, and shall speak very briefly of those persons who furthered or hindered her mission. Our object is not to make a study of Charles VII., La Trémoille, the Duke of Alençon, Dunois, or of the soldiers, politicians, theologians and prelates—all the contemporaneous history connected with Joan of Arc—but of Joan herself and of Joan only. It is her soul which we wish to try to understand and explain. We shall therefore pay especial attention to her own words, words spoken to her king, to her companions in arms, or to her judges. Her own testimony is by far the most trustworthy, simple, candid and expressive, and Joan of Arc still remains the best historian of Joan of Arc. We shall also consider the mass of evidence

collected during the case for rehabilitation,<sup>1</sup> remembering that if it adds in some measure to her glory it can contribute few new features to her moral stature, the beauty of which was sufficiently apparent in her attitude and her answers at the trial, and indeed stood out with an intensity of life and truth beyond the reach of any document. We shall not, however, neglect the accounts of contemporary chroniclers, though it is impossible not to regret that their indirect and second-hand evidence should so frequently be lifeless and even at times inaccurate. Still, they are agreed upon all the essential points; and, though a summary of facts is not our main object, it is at least a means to an end, for it is by dwelling upon these facts, facts which, except for a few unimportant details, are now thoroughly elucidated, that we shall endeavour to enter into the thoughts, emotions and aspirations of the saint and heroine.

At the first sitting<sup>2</sup> of the court at the trial which was to end in her martyrdom, Joan of Arc introduced herself to her judges: "In my own country," she said, "they used to call me Jeannette; since my arrival in France I have been called Jeanne. I was born at Domremy, which makes one along with Greux; the principal church is at Greux. My father's name is Jacques d'Arc,<sup>3</sup> my mother's

<sup>1</sup> No evidence was heard during the case for conviction.

<sup>2</sup> Wednesday, 21st February 1431.

<sup>3</sup> Some historians erroneously write "Jeanne Darc" in one word, so as to confer on Joan a patent of plebeian birth, in which they make a double mistake. On the one hand, the particle does not signify nobility, nor its absence plebeian birth; and on the other

Isabelle;<sup>1</sup> I believe myself to be about nineteen years of age."

The little village of Domremy is divided by a stream which flows into the Meuse. The part on the north side of the stream was held directly from the King of France, and was comprised in the bailiwick of Chaumont-en-Bassigny; that on the south was held of the Duke of Bar, a vassal of the King of France. Just across the Meuse was Lorraine, an independent country. Joan of Arc was in no way a native of Lorraine.<sup>2</sup> The cottage where she was born formed part of the direct inheritance of the King of France. It is true that the stream which separated it from the territory of Bar flows at the very door of the house,<sup>3</sup> but even had she been a native of Bar (which she was not) this would not have made her a Lorrainian. Lorraine began at the hand, the apostrophe was unknown in the fifteenth century, and "duc D'Orleans" was written "duc dorleans" just as "Jeanne d'Arc" was written "Jeanne Darc." "Darc," however, is meaningless. The family of Joan's father probably came originally from Arc in the territory of Bar between Chaumont and Langres. Her father, Jacques, was born at Ceffonds near Montierender (Haute Marne).

<sup>1</sup> Isabelle Romée, of Vouthon, near Domremy.

<sup>2</sup> See the explicit words of the letter sent to the Duke of Milan by the Steward of Berry, Percival de Boulainvilliers (21st June 1429); He says:—"She was born in a small village of the name of Domremy, in the bailiwick of Bessigny, on this side of, and not far from the frontiers of the Kingdom of France, on the banks of the river Meuse near Lorraine" (Quicherat, *Procès de Jeanne d'Arc*, vol. v. 116). That Domremy was later included in Lorraine matters little. Joan was born a Frenchwoman, and therefore not a Lorrainian. Lorraine was territory of the Empire.

<sup>3</sup> The actual house was rebuilt in 1480 on the site of the one in which Joan was born, part of which has survived in the reconstruction.

neighbouring village of Maxey upon the right bank of the Meuse, where prayers were said for the victory of the English and the Burgundians. Greux and Domremy were loyal to the French king.<sup>1</sup> The children of Maxey and those of Greux used to fight battles among themselves, several of which were witnessed by Joan, who recalled them to her memory when speaking to her judges. "I have seen them come back wounded and covered with blood," she said. These childish frays, however, do not seem to have had any great influence upon the silent, self-centred, and entirely inward and personal development of her warlike mission and her patriotism.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> With the sole exception of one man, who to Joan's great indignation belonged to the Burgundian party.

<sup>2</sup> We know that Joan obtained from the king the favour of exempting Domremy and Greux from feudal taxation. The king could not have exempted from taxes any village which was not held directly from his crown. Domremy lost this privilege when Charles IX. ceded the village to the Duke of Lorraine and Bar (25th Jan. 1571). It claimed the restoration of this right of exemption, which was a title of honour as well, when, after the death of Stanislas, Lorraine became French. The terms of the royal letter remove all doubts as to the nationality of Joan of Arc: "Charles, etc., to the bailiff of Chaumont, etc., we desire to inform you that by the favour and at the request of our well-beloved Joan the Maid, and for the great, mighty, notable and profitable services she has rendered and is daily rendering us for the recovery of our domain, we have granted and do hereby grant special privileges to the peasants and inhabitants of the town and village of Greux and Domremy, in the said province of Chaumont-en-Bassigny, of which the said Joan is a native, that they be henceforward free, clear and exempt from all taxes, aids, subsidies and subventions levied or to be levied upon the said parish." The letters were given at Chateau-Thierry, 31st July 1429.



Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle Romée were small farmers owning a cottage and fifty acres of land, consisting of field, wood, and meadow, which they cultivated themselves, toiling with their own hands. They were poor but not needy. Jacques d'Arc held a position of honour in his little village; he was styled *doyen*, a title which placed him second only to the mayor and the sheriff. He had three sons, Jacques, Jean and Pierre, and two daughters, Catherine<sup>1</sup> and Joan. The latter, the younger of the two, was probably born on the 6th of January 1412.<sup>2</sup> She was baptized in the church at Domremy, and, according to a custom general at the time, had four godfathers and four godmothers. She grew up among rustic pleasures and labours without receiving any education; she was never able either to read or write. She could, however, sew and spin admirably. "In sewing and spinning," she proudly tells her judges,<sup>3</sup> "I will match myself against any woman in Rouen." "In my father's house," she continues, "I was occupied with household duties, I did not go into the fields to tend the flocks." She frequently reverts to this fact,<sup>4</sup> which I notice because legend has been apt to represent her as

<sup>1</sup> It is believed that this elder sister died before Joan left home (see St Luce, *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy*, p. 35). Yet Joan spoke later to Dunois of a sister who was alive; see *post*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Date established upon the evidence of the letter of Boulainvilliers to the Duke of Milan quoted above.

<sup>3</sup> First hearing, 21st Feb. 1431.

<sup>4</sup> "Did you drive the cattle into the fields?"—"No, not since I grew up, and had reached years of discretion. I cannot remember now whether I tended them when I was a child" (3rd hearing, Quicherat, *Procès*, etc., vol. i. p. 66).

a shepherdess, whereas she was in reality more of a housewife. She received her religious instruction solely from her mother, from whom she learned her prayers. She knew Our Father, Hail Mary and the Creed by heart. Further than that her education did not go; and in after years the equivocal questions of her judges upon the "Church Militant" were the cause of her undoing, for, failing to understand the meaning of these words, she made two or three imprudent answers of which an unfair advantage was taken.

In this simple life her faith and her piety were remarkable even from childhood. Whatever time she could spare from her work she spent in church; she was constantly seen absorbed in prayer, and the only fault which her companions could find with her was that she was too grave and devout. She loved the sound of the church bells, because they were a call to prayer; and used to give the bell-ringer little presents, such as wool from her own sheep, that he might perform his duties with great regularity. As charitable as she was pious, she loved the poor tenderly, and gave as much as she was able to in alms. Many a time she put some homeless and wretched creature into her bed and spent the night upon the hearth. When twelve years old she ceased to join in the games of the boys and girls of her own age, and was seen no longer dancing under the "Fairy Tree." She still followed the happy band of children to it, but held somewhat aloof, not morosely, but pensively.

This "Fairy Tree" plays an important part in the

trial, and nothing could have better suited the perfidy of the judges than to have traced Joan's victories to this suspicious or diabolical source. This, however, they were unable to do, and it is extraordinary to note how impossible it was to find the slightest evidence of superstition in her ignorance.

"Was there not a tree close to your house?"

"There is a tree called the Ladies' Tree or the Fairies' Tree, fairly close to Domremy, and I have heard that people suffering from fever drink of the water to be cured. I have even seen some drink it but whether they were healed or not I do not know. It is said also that the sick, as soon as they are able to leave their beds, go and walk near this tree. I used to go there sometimes with the other maids and make wreaths for the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Domremy. And several times I have heard some old people who were no relations of mine say that the spot was haunted by fairies. A woman called Joan, who was my godmother and the wife of the Mayor of Aubery, went so far as to say that she had seen the fairies. I do not know whether this is true or not; but I have never seen them. I have seen the young girls hang their garlands on the branches of the tree; I have hung them there myself. As soon as I knew that I was to come to France, I took as little part as possible in the games and expeditions. I do not know whether, since reaching years of discretion, I have danced around the tree. It is quite possible that I have danced there sometimes with the children, but I more often sang than danced. There is a wood

called the Oak<sup>1</sup> Wood, about half a league away and visible from the door of my father's house. I have never heard that it was haunted by fairies. When I came to seek the king, some people asked me if there was not a wood called the Oak Wood in my country, because it was said in ancient prophecies that from the neighbourhood of such a wood a maiden would come who should work miracles, but I put no faith in that."<sup>2</sup>

She was happy in her father's home, and the calm of her childhood was only broken by public disasters. War was everywhere. Vaucouleurs, near Domremy, which had remained loyal to the King of France, was completely hemmed in by the Anglo-Burgundian garrisons which occupied Champagne. Favoured by the warlike condition of the country, brigandage was rampant, and it was not always easy to know whether one was dealing with the enemy or with the robbers, so difficult was it to distinguish between them. In 1425 all the parish live stock of Greux and Domremy (the principal wealth of a country where arable land was poor) was seized by a ringleader called Henri d'Orly who carried it off as far as Doulevant, twenty leagues away, where fortunately it was recaptured by the retainers of the Count of Vaudemont. As a rule, when Domremy was threatened, men and beasts took refuge on an island in the Meuse which was defended by a fortress. But in July 1428 the enemy

<sup>1</sup> Bois-Chesnu, the Oak Wood ; not Bois-Chenu, the White Wood.

<sup>2</sup> Third hearing, Quicherat, *Procès*, etc., vol. i. pp. 67, 68.

appeared so menacing, that they fled further afield to Neufchâteau in Lorrainian territory, three leagues south of Domremy, where Joan spent a fortnight, lodging with a good woman called La Rousse. The malice of her enemies subsequently travestied this hostess as an innkeeper, and they pretended that Joan had been in her service for several months or even years. The truth is that she only spent a fortnight at Neufchâteau, and was never separated from her family for a moment.

At this time (July 1428) she was sixteen and a half years old, and a few weeks had elapsed since she had disclosed to a small circle of intimates the secret of her mission, long enshrined in her heart. It was exactly three years since she had first heard the mysterious "voice" which for three more years, until the day of martyrdom, was continually to whisper in her ear.

It was during the summer of 1425, at mid-day, in her father's garden, that a voice proceeding from the right hand side, as if from the vicinity of the church, had spoken to her. The first time she heard the voice "she was greatly terrified" (*magnum timorem*). At the trial, when questioned about this first vision, she said, that "she rarely heard the voice without at the same time seeing a great blaze of light in the direction from which it came." She did not however give the details which we find in a letter written by Percival of Boulainvilliers, Steward of Berry, to the Duke of Milan, at the time when Joan of Arc had just arrived at Court. Are these

details authentic? We should prefer to have heard them from the mouth of Joan herself, but the witness is trustworthy and he may have taken them directly from her. He tells us that she was frolicking in the meadows with her youthful companions; so swift and light of foot that to their astounded gaze it seemed as if she were flying rather than running. At last she paused breathless, "in an ecstasy, as if beside herself." At the same instant she heard a strange voice calling her back to the house, where her mother had need of her. She walked away from her companions, but as she drew near the house she again heard the same voice, and no doubt it was then that, as she told her judges, she grew frightened, "But," she hastened to add, "the voice was kind, the voice came from God. When I had heard it thrice, I knew full well that it was the voice of an angel." "Joan, what did this voice tell you for the salvation of your soul?"—"To walk uprightly and to be diligent at church." The voice did not at first speak to her of her going to France to the succour of King Charles VII. But the third time she heard it, she knew that it was St Michael who spoke to her.

For fifteen years the loyal subjects of King Charles VII. had looked upon St Michael as their greatest heavenly protector. The Abbey<sup>1</sup> consecrated to him "on the margin of the perilous sea," when besieged by the English, had proved impregnable, and was destined to remain so always; it is the only spot of Norman territory which escaped

<sup>1</sup> Mont St Michel "au Pêril de la mer."

the yoke of the invader. In June 1425 the English had even suffered a great naval disaster before the invincible citadel. The soldiers of Henry VI. the Usurper, however, occupied St Denis with its royal oriflamme and tombs and, because they were master of the walls and the relics they, in their rude faith, believed that they had also won the saint himself to their cause. "Has St Denis appeared to you?" Cauchon anxiously asked Joan. "Not that I know of," she replied—an answer which must have reassured the ally of the English.

Let us clearly understand the circumstances under which Joan received the revelation of her voices for the first time. She was thirteen and a half years old. As yet there had been nothing to distinguish her from other children of her own age and station. She merely seems to have been gentler, more pious and more thoughtful than her companions; less fond of games and singing and dancing; more addicted to prayer and long services in the church. But apart from this, at the age of thirteen she seems to have shown no signs of exaltation or mysticism, either religious or patriotic. The sadness with which the war coloured her childhood has sometimes been exaggerated. There were many provinces which suffered far more acutely than this military frontier of Lorraine, which was comparatively exempt, and where the mischief was confined to bloodless alarms, to the menaces of bands of plunderers and to hasty flights with the cattle which they wanted to steal. Probably before her first action, Joan of Arc had never witnessed the shedding

of any French blood save that of the small boys of Domremy who fought the "Burgundians" of Maxey with stones. So during the summer of 1425 the first "voices" broke as a surprise and an awakening upon the perfect tranquillity of her young soul. It was the "voices" which gradually created the state of patriotic exaltation which three years later we see in Joan of Arc; not the exaltation which preceded and, so to speak, called forth the voices. We would also point out that the voices did not at first speak to her of her mission, but for a long time confined themselves to counsels of piety. Then as she grew older and her mind developed, the mission was gradually revealed to her. She first thrust it away from her in anguish, then accepted it, and finally embraced it with passionate ardour. This growth and progress of events should be very carefully remembered. We see that it was the mysterious revelation, explain it how we may, which gradually moulded Joan of Arc's soul and will; not in the least (as many people seem to believe without any proof, indeed, against all the evidence) her own inwardly developed and personal exaltation which invited, called forth, almost forced the revelation. Indeed the first time she heard the voice she was greatly terrified, so little had she expected or invoked it, so unprepared were her ears and her soul for the miracle.

St Michael did not appear to her alone but "surrounded by a host of heavenly angels." "I saw them," she solemnly told her judges, "with these very eyes, as well as I see you; and when



they vanished from my sight, I wept and greatly longed that they would take me with them.”<sup>1</sup>

Joan of Arc never made any definite statement as to the exact moment when the voice revealed to her her mission. It seems that the revelation was made gradually and at various intervals. She was first told that she must go to France to the succour of the king. “The angel told her of the sorry plight of the kingdom of France.” He also promised other apparitions, and that St Margaret and St Catherine would come to comfort and guide her. These saints indeed began to appear and to speak to her. After the first apparitions, Joan, without having received any command to do so, made a vow to God to remain a virgin.

The secret of the “voices” she disclosed to no one, not even to her father, her mother or her confessor.<sup>2</sup> She kept it in her heart, a secret between God and herself. This absolute silence, maintained during three years by so young a child, testifies to a nature of singular strength, thoughtfulness and self-control. In May 1428, however, towards Ascension-tide, the voices became more urgent and bade her proceed to Vaucouleurs where

<sup>1</sup> Fourth hearing, Quicherat, *Procès*, etc., vol. i. p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> To this she bears positive testimony (Examination on the 12th March in the prison, Quicherat, *Procès*, vol. i. p. 128). “Asked if she had spoken of her alleged visions to her priest or to any other churchman, she replied that she had not, but only to Robert de Baudricourt and to the king. She said further that her voices did not compel her to secrecy, but that she was very frightened of revealing them for fear of the Burgundians, who would stop her journey; and especially she greatly feared her father who would have opposed her departure.

Robert de Baudricourt was in command for the King of France. This man was a brave and loyal soldier, but rich and dissolute, an intriguer and a sceptic, and seemed the last man to believe in the warlike mission of a girl of sixteen. Nor did he believe in it when Joan of Arc's uncle, Durand Laxard,<sup>1</sup> yielding to his niece's entreaties, brought her to him secretly, and timidly spoke of her wish to go to the assistance of the king. Robert took the man for a fool and the girl for an adventuress, and would not have hesitated to treat her, or allow her to be treated with scant respect had there not always been a certain dignity and reserve about Joan which intimidated and disconcerted the coarsest and most daring. He gave her back to Durand, saying: "Take her home to her father, and give her a good whipping." This humiliating episode did not discourage Joan. A few days later, on St John's eve (23rd June 1428) she said to a husbandman, one Michel Lebuin: "Between Coussey and Vaucouleurs there is a maiden who before a year is past will bring about the coronation of the King of France."

Some rumour of this unsuccessful attempt must have reached Domremy, for towards the end of the year 1428, Joan's father dreamt that he saw her escaping with some soldiers. He said to his sons: "If that should happen, drown her, or I will drown her with my own hands."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> She called him her uncle although he was only the husband of a first cousin older than herself.

<sup>2</sup> In order to keep her at home, her parents probably tried to

Meanwhile Orleans had been invested since the 12th October (1428), and the complete defeat of the French king seemed imminent. Becoming more and more frequent, the voices spoke to Joan several times a week urging, commanding, almost threatening. She tried to struggle against the divine command, saying to the voices: "I am a poor girl; I do not know how to ride or fight." Was it really God who was sending her? "I would rather be drawn and quartered than go to France against God's will." But the voice replied: "It is the will of God; it is God who commands it." Finally, unable any longer to resist, Joan sorrowfully but resolutely decided to leave home without a word of warning to her family, and without bidding them good-bye. Once more the worthy Durand proved her protector in this cruel step. His wife was about to be confined, and he came to fetch Joan under the pretext of asking her to assist in nursing the sick woman. She left Domremy early in January 1429, never to return. When leaving the village she met one of her little friends, Mengette by name, and greeted her, recommending her to God. But she said nothing to her parents or to her other girl friend Hauviette, who, at the case for rehabilitation twenty-seven years later, testified to the tears she had shed on hearing of Joan's departure.<sup>1</sup>

marry her. A young man summoned her before the ecclesiastical judge of Toul, alleging that she had promised to marry him. Joan had no difficulty in proving that he lied, and with that the matter ended.

<sup>1</sup> A short time before her departure she had said to Gérard d'Épinal, the only person in Domremy who belonged to the

Neither her father nor her mother appears to have taken any steps towards recalling her when they subsequently heard that she was on her way to Chinon. Were they beginning to believe in her mission? Or were they indignant at her secret flight and resolved to abandon her to her fate? The second theory is the more probable, for they did not come to Vaucouleurs to take leave of her and give her their blessing. At Rouen when her judges reproached her with her conduct towards her father and mother, she answered: "It had to be. Since that time I have had letters written to them, and they have forgiven me. Had I had a hundred fathers and a hundred mothers, had I been a king's daughter, I should have gone. . . ."

At Vaucouleurs Durand found lodgings for her with some worthy people,<sup>1</sup> Henri and Catherine Leroyer, who seem to have been the first to believe firmly in her. Her ardour and her faith, however, soon proved contagious, and a small circle of followers formed itself in Vaucouleurs. Jean Nouillonpont,<sup>2</sup> one of the men-at-arms who were afterwards to take her to Chinon, saw her during this painful period of suspense in Henri Leroyer's

Burgundian party, "Friend, if you were not a Burgundian I would tell you something." He saw her again six months later at Châlons when she spoke these strange words to him: "I fear naught but treachery."

<sup>1</sup> He himself stayed at Burey near Vaucouleurs; probably Joan wished to stay in the town itself, so as to allow Baudricourt no respite.

<sup>2</sup> Also called John of Metz. In March 1441 a title of nobility was conferred upon him for his services to the royal cause.

house. He gave evidence of this at the case for rehabilitation. She was dressed in a wretched red gown. "My friend," he said to her, "what are you going to do? Must the king be driven from his own kingdom, and must we become English?"

"I have come here," answered Joan, "to the king's chamber<sup>1</sup> to persuade Robert of Baudricourt to take me, or order me to be taken to the king. He pays no heed either to me or to my words; and yet I must reach the king before the middle of Lent, though I wear my feet to the knees. For no one in the world, neither kings nor dukes, nor the daughter of the king of Scotland,<sup>2</sup> nor any other can save the kingdom of France; there is no help save in me. I would much rather have stayed spinning beside my poor mother, for this is not my profession (fighting); but I must go and I shall go, because it is my Lord's wish." "Who is your Lord?" "My Lord is God."

Then Jean de Nouillonpont, taking Joan's hand in his own, promised her that with the help of God he would lead her to the king. "When will you start? Rather now than to-morrow; rather to-morrow than later."

She had seen Robert Baudricourt several times. Nothing was easier than to meet the Governor in this little town, and doubtless she took pains to

<sup>1</sup> That is, to a town held directly of the king.

<sup>2</sup> She was speaking in February 1429. The preliminary negotiations for the marriage of the dauphin (the future Louis XI., then aged six) with Margaret of Scotland, aged five, were not made before July 1428. It is remarkable that news of them should have already penetrated to the frontiers of Lorraine.

place herself daily upon his path. At first he persisted in his incredulous and mocking attitude; but as day by day the political and military situation of Charles VII. became more critical, Baudricourt, despairing of any human assistance, grew less brutal in his refusals to listen to this girl who offered him supernatural aid. He fully realised that there was something strange about her; but the question was whether she was sent by God, or by the devil. He broke in suddenly one day upon the Leroyer household, accompanied by the priest, Jean Fournier, wearing his stole, who on perceiving Joan thus adjured her: "If thou be evil, stand back and depart from hence; if thou be good, draw near." Sinking upon her knees at the priest's feet, Joan answered him: "Have you not heard me in confession?" Then turning to Baudricourt, she continued: "I tell you that I must go and find the dauphin. Have you never heard that it has been prophesied that France should be lost through a woman,<sup>1</sup> and afterwards restored by a virgin from the borders of Lorraine?" "Time hangs as heavy with me as with a woman who draws near her time," she said to her hostess. "I shall go, if I have to travel upon my knees." She spent the whole day praying in the Castle chapel, prostrate, broken and in tears, imploring God to soften the heart of Baudricourt.

The news of her presence in Vaucouleurs began to spread abroad and arouse the public curiosity. Two great personages, the old Duke of Lorraine, Charles II., the Bold, and his son-in-law, René of

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to Isabella of Bavaria.

Anjou, Duke of Bar,<sup>1</sup> expressed a desire to see her. She was escorted to Nancy by Durand Laxard, and made a pilgrimage to St-Nicholas-du-Port. The duke was ill, and asked Joan for a remedy. Doubtless she told him that her mission was quite a different one. Charles dismissed her, making her a present of a horse which presumably he had not chosen from amongst the best in his stables, for a few days later the duke's horse was found incapable of carrying Joan to Chinon.

She returned to Vaucouleurs on Sunday the 13th February. On Thursday the 17th, she announced to Baudricourt another defeat of the King of France, at what was called the battle of the Herrings, fought and lost on the previous Saturday outside Orleans. Baudricourt received confirmation of the news in a few days and no doubt was immensely impressed. From that moment he was mollified, if not convinced, and once having come to a decision he pushed matters forward.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the people of Vaucouleurs, at Joan's express desire, had joined together to have a man's

<sup>1</sup> Although a brother-in-law of Charles VII., he inclined towards the English party; a few weeks later he acknowledged Henry VI., and signed a treaty of alliance with the English king (6th May 1429), two days before the relief of Orleans.

<sup>2</sup> It has been conjectured that he sounded the wishes of the king and the opinion of the court, and that the result was favourable to Joan of Arc. Among her travelling companions we shall see a certain Colet de Vienne, *King's Messenger*. Had he been sent secretly from Chinon to fetch her? What makes this improbable is that at the case for rehabilitation, John de Nouillonpont declared that he and Bertram de Poulangy had defrayed the travelling expenses for which, moreover, he was reimbursed.

costume made for her consisting of a doublet,<sup>1</sup> a pair of long hose, a tunic reaching to the knee, and a pair of high gaiters. A horse costing sixteen francs was bought for her, and three men-at-arms volunteered to accompany her, each taking a servant. These were Colet de Vienne, "royal messenger," and his servant Richard the Archer, Bertrand de Poulangy and his servant Julien de Honnecourt, and Jean de Nouillonpont (also called Jean de Metz) and his servant, Jean de Honnecourt or Dieuleward. The little band, numbering seven souls, set forth from Vaucouleurs on the evening of Wednesday the 23rd February 1429. Baudricourt's last words to Joan on taking leave of her were "Go then, whatever may betide!"

<sup>1</sup> The jerkin or doublet and the hat were black ; the tunic or short skirt was grey. The costume is exactly described (as far as we can tell) by the chronicler called the "Recorder of la Rochelle."



## CHAPTER II

### CHINON

TO avoid any risk of meeting either the English or the Burgundians, by whom the roads were infested, they travelled as much as possible at night. They were eleven days on the road from Vaucouleurs to Chinon, passing by the abbey of St-Urbain, Auxerre, Gien, and Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois. The other points of their itinerary are not known to us. Brave as they were, the men could not conceal their anxiety; but they were reassured by Joan of Arc, who said to them from time to time: "Fear nothing, for I am commanded to do this; my brothers in Paradise tell me everything I must do. It is four or five years since my brothers in Paradise and my Lord told me that I must go to the wars to win back the kingdom of France."<sup>1</sup>

At night she slept fully dressed among her escort, none of whom, as they testified upon oath, ever dared form even a thought injurious to her innocence, so great a feeling of respect did she inspire, a feeling which seemed to surround and protect her till her death. She herself would have liked to attend Mass every day during the journey, but from

<sup>1</sup> To be exact it was three years and eight months, from the summer of 1425 to February 1429.

motives of prudence and fearing to show themselves too frequently, they heard it but twice.<sup>1</sup> She amazed her companions by her piety and gentleness, her faith and enthusiasm. One of them, Bertrand de Poulangy, a witness at the trial, brought his evidence to a close with these words: "To me she seemed as good as if she were a saint!" When they reached Ste-Catherine-de-Fierbois in Touraine, which was friendly territory, she indulged herself in the joy of hearing three masses in succession. From there she caused a letter to be written to the king announcing her approach. Joan's arrival was most opportune. The kingdom was in dire extremities; there was not another crown in the treasury wherewith to pay the few remaining soldiers. Orleans could not hold out more than a few days longer, and once the town had fallen, where could refuge be sought? In the Dauphiné, perhaps, or even abroad, in Spain, or in Scotland, but the outlook was a desperate one.

The little band entered Chinon on the 6th March 1429. Although Joan's arrival had been announced and was expected, it seems that those in whose power the king was, especially La Trémoille, the favourite minister, had not yet decided to allow him to see her. She was kept waiting for two days before she was at last admitted into the presence of Charles VII.<sup>2</sup> We know how the king, in order to test her, hid himself among the courtiers of his own age, taking care not to be distinguished

<sup>1</sup> Probably at St-Urbain, where she stayed at the Abbey, and certainly at Auxerre, where she heard Mass at the Cathedral.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Simon Charles, president of the Court of Accounts.

by his dress. Yet Joan, who had never seen him, recognised him, and walked straight towards him; then falling upon her knees, she said: "God grant you long life, noble King!" Charles pretended to undeceive her: "I am not the King," he said. "In the name of God, Sire, you are the King and none other." She then demanded troops with which to raise the siege of Orleans and escort the king to Rheims, where he would be crowned. For it was the will of God that the English should be driven from France, and that the kingdom should remain in the hands of its rightful king.

This first interview produced little effect. The prejudice against Joan was general. The king, although affable, remained suspicious, his opinions being unfavourably affected by La Trémoille, whose influence was all powerful at the time. While priests were despatched to Domremy to make enquiries about Joan, she herself was questioned and closely examined at Chinon by every variety of person, both ecclesiastics and laymen. The frivolous and corrupt court was little inclined to believe in divine intervention. Some pronounced it to be a "farce"; others, less sceptical, but none the less prejudiced, feared it was some wile of the devil.

Joan was in despair at not being believed. The danger was increasing. If they refused to obey God and take her to Orleans the town might fall at any moment. "Noble Dauphin," she said to Charles VII., "why do you not believe me? I tell you that God has pity upon your kingdom and upon

your people. For St Louis and St Charlemagne are kneeling before Him, praying for you, and if you will allow me I will tell you something which will bring you to realise that you must believe in me.”<sup>1</sup> At last one day she took courage and revealed to him a secret which he thought was unknown to anyone but himself, and the king was amazed and believed in her.

What was this secret? At the trial Joan consistently refused to explain it, though she thereby ran the risk of irritating, and did in fact irritate her judges, whose curiosity she succeeded in baffling. The general belief, expressed in writing as early as the time of Louis XII. and in all probability well-founded, has been that this “Secret of the King” related to the legitimacy of his birth.<sup>2</sup> The story ran that upon All Saints’ Day, a few months before the arrival of Joan of Arc, the son of Isabella of Bavaria, troubled and discouraged by the endless series of reverses and disasters by which he was incessantly overwhelmed in his struggle against the English Usurper, asked himself with anguish whether he were indeed the legitimate heir to the crown of France, imploring God, if he were not, to remove from his heart the desire to conquer it. This scene had passed unwitnessed. Joan described it to the king and reassured him, convincing him of the justness of his claim.

<sup>1</sup> *Chronique de la Pucelle* (a compilation drawn up about 1470 from good sources).

<sup>2</sup> *Abbréviateur du Procès*, p. 254 (an anonymous work compiled about 1500 from authentic sources).

The king was now converted, but not the court. Indeed, it never was quite converted, even in the days of the most glorious triumphs. For the dispelling of all doubts and the removal of all scruples, the king desired Joan to be solemnly interviewed by several bishops, by the members of his Parliament, and by those doctors of the University of Paris who had remained loyal to him.

From Chinon she was taken to Poitiers, where these learned men were sitting. She was installed in the house of Jean Rabateau, Solicitor-General to the Parliament, and hither came the examiners, as keen as if they had been judges to try her. A certain Carmelite friar, a doctor of divinity and a "very harsh man,"<sup>1</sup> said to her: "It is forbidden in the Scriptures to believe in such words unless a 'sign' (miracle) be shown." "I do not wish to tempt God," she answered boldly. "The 'sign' which God has appointed for me is to raise the siege of Orleans and to lead the king to be crowned at Rheims. Go thither and you will see." Guillaume Aymery, another doctor of divinity, one of the preaching friars, said to her: "Joan, you ask for men-at-arms, and you say that it is God's will that the English depart out of the kingdom of France and return to their own country. If this be so, then is there no need of men-at-arms, for the will of God is sufficient in itself to defeat them and send them home." "I ask for men-at-arms," she answered, "but a small number will suffice. They will fight; God will give victory."

<sup>1</sup> *Chronique de la Pucelle.*

Frank, simple and fearless, she had an answer for everything, providing that she understood what was being said to her; but when they tried to puzzle her with intricate questions, the scope and meaning of which she could not fully grasp, she quickly evaded them, saying: "I do not know my letters. I am sent by the King of Heaven to raise the siege of Orleans and to conduct the King to Rheims, where he will be crowned and anointed."<sup>1</sup>

The Dominican friar Seguin, who had inherited the accents of his native province of Limousin, said to her: "In what language did the voice which you profess to have heard speak to you?" "In a better one than yours," she slyly answered. Seeing them still suspicious and unmoved she passionately reiterated: "Give me soldiers, as few as you like!"

The examination, of which unfortunately all the documents<sup>2</sup> have been lost, lasted for three weeks. When the theologians had finished, the members of Parliament wished in their turn to question her, and, perhaps because they were less interested in assuring themselves that the spirit by which she was actuated was not an evil one, they seem to have been more easily won by her simplicity, good faith

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Gobert Thibault, Squire.

<sup>2</sup> The loss of the official reports of the examination conducted at Poitiers can never be sufficiently deplored. In her trial Joan continually referred to them, and most justly opposed this first sentence of the Church, against the one with which she was then threatened. This unfortunate hiatus in the history of her life leaves us in almost complete ignorance of her childhood. The minutes of the proceedings at Poitiers were not quoted in the case for rehabilitation, and must then have been already lost.

and enthusiasm. After them all the women and maidens of Poitiers came to interview her, and to all of these she spoke so graciously that she reduced them to tears. They expressed astonishment, however, at seeing her dressed like a man. "I fully understand," she said to them, "that it must seem strange to you, and rightly so; but, since I must fight for the noble Dauphin, I must assume the apparel suitable for a soldier; and when I find myself among the troops if I am dressed as a man, they will forget that I am a woman; and so it seems to me that I shall the better preserve my virginity of thought and deed."

The pertinacity with which Joan clung to her masculine attire so long as she was obliged to live among men, either as a soldier or as a prisoner, is explained beforehand in this answer, and it is unnecessary to seek any other motive for it. She knew that war is not a woman's business, and therefore, out of respect for her sex, she wished to lay aside woman's garments when she felt compelled to fight in obedience to the will of God. This girl of seventeen, alone and defenceless among rough soldiers, ended in attaching a certain mystic virtue to the manly garb which was her protection. So long as she wore it she felt that with her sex thus disguised, her modesty would be in no danger.

The ardour of her faith seems ultimately to have softened the hearts of the inquisitors. The verdict of the wise men of Poitiers was favourable to Joan of Arc; without vouching for the miraculous nature of her mission, or rather, putting this character of

it on one side (Joan herself only professed to perform marvels not miracles), the learned men advised the king to make a prudent use of the assistance which God might perhaps be sending him through the medium of this young girl, in whom they had been able to detect no evil. "In view of his own necessity and that of his kingdom, and considering the constant prayers of his poor people to God, and for the sake of all those who loved peace and justice, the king should not reject or thwart the Maid, who says she is sent by God to his assistance, notwithstanding that her promises be only human deeds. Nor should he believe lightly in her and at times only, but following the Holy Scripture, should test her in two ways (by human prudence and devout prayer)"<sup>1</sup>

Her stay in Poitiers was long remembered in the town. Jean Bouchet, the author of *Annales d'Aquitaine*, relates that in 1495 he conversed in Poitiers with an old man, Christophe de Peyrat, nearly a hundred years old, who showed him the house where Joan had stopped and told him that he had seen her "mount her horse entirely clad in

<sup>1</sup> It should be observed that these doctors of Poitiers who examined Joan of Arc and passed favourable sentence upon her before any miraculous event had supported the fact of her mission, were ecclesiastical personages of great distinction, theologians fully as well qualified as those who afterwards condemned her: Regnault de Chartres, Archbishop of Rheims; Bishop Pierre of Versailles (afterwards of Meaux); Gérard Machet, Confessor to the king; Pierre Seguin, a Carmelite; Guillaume Seguin and Guillaume Aymery, Dominicans; Jean Raffanel, a Franciscan; Jean de Mâcon, a Doctor of Orleans; Hugues Comparelli, Bishop of Poitiers. Most of these learned doctors belonged to the dissentient party in the University of Paris.



white armour" to go to Orleans. He even pointed out, at the corner of the rue St Etienne, a stone which she had used in mounting.

Joan returned to Chinon towards the middle of April.<sup>1</sup> The king was convinced, or at least had made up his mind to try the experiment; and his council too had reluctantly given in. Neither La Trémoille nor the Archbishop of Rheims, Regnault de Chartres, ever believed in Joan of Arc. Everywhere we can see traces of the opposition which they and many others offered to the plans of the Maid. Suffice it to say that the opinion of those who looked upon her "mission" as a cunning trick devised by schemers, is in absolute contradiction to established facts, though it was held by many people at the time. But contemporaries do not know everything, and at Charles VII.'s court especially, policy was discreet and hatred silent. It will soon become only too apparent that Joan of Arc was never able to disarm the hatred, jealousy and suspicions of many members of her own party. The only people who sincerely believed in her were a few leaders such as the Duke of Alençon, La Hire, Dunois and Poton de Xaintrailles, and even

<sup>1</sup> The reader should remember that on the 13th April 1429, René of Anjou, Duke of Bar (brother-in-law of Charles VII.) did homage for his duchy of Bar to the Duke of Bedford, Regent. If Joan had been a native of Bar, René would have been her lawful sovereign, and she, by serving Charles VII., would have been in open revolt against him, for René had joined the side of Henry VI., with whom he signed a treaty of alliance on the 6th May 1429, two days before the relief of Orleans! But Joan was a native of Champagne and belongs to France.

in their case one would not like to say that their faith survived defeat.

While the army was being made ready, Joan was sent to Tours, and the king appointed a few men-at-arms as a bodyguard for her. Two of her brothers, Jean and Pierre, had joined her, and she kept Jean de Metz and Bertram de Poulangy with her. A brave knight, one Jean d'Aulon, was her steward; Louis de Contes, a youth of fifteen, her page; and Jean Pasquerel, an Austin friar, her chaplain and confessor-in-ordinary.

Much of the evidence collected at the case for rehabilitation was that of priests or monks to whom Joan had confessed on one or upon several occasions. They one and all agree in extolling her humility and devoutness, and the faith and ardour which she showed in attending very frequently the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. Yet none of them seems to have exercised any lasting and personal influence over her, and although she had many confessors she had no spiritual director. Jean Pasquerel, who was her chaplain from her arrival in Chinon until her imprisonment, confessed her more frequently than anyone else, "almost daily" he asserted in his evidence, with no doubt some slight exaggeration; and he marvelled at the tears of contrition she shed while confessing. But many other priests also confessed her while this monk was attached to her person, yet neither he nor any of them seems ever to have become her director.

Having given her a faithful and suitable escort the king wished to equip her for war, and presented her

with a horse and a suit of armour. But she refused the sword he offered her, and requested that someone should be sent to the Chapel of St Catherine-en-Fierbois to unearth an ancient sword which was buried there behind the altar, covered with rust and marked with five crosses. No one knew of the existence of this sword, which was found in the very spot indicated to Joan by her voices. It was polished to look like new and brought to her. This marvellous discovery created a great stir.<sup>1</sup>

In the same manner Joan ordered the design of her standard, which she commanded to be made of linen embroidered in silk, entirely white and decorated with fleurs de lis. On one side, underneath the inscription JESUS, MARIA, was represented the image of God the Father seated upon the clouds, holding in His hand the terrestrial globe; also two kneeling angels presenting Him with a fleur de lis. On the other side were the arms of France upheld by two angels. Besides the standard, she caused to be

<sup>1</sup> Joan herself spoke to her judges of the sword of St Catherine : " When asked how she knew that the sword was in that particular spot, she replied that the sword was buried in the earth, covered with rust and marked with five crosses. Her voices had told her that it was there ; she had never seen the man who went in search of the said sword, but she had written to the clergy in the neighbourhood asking them if they would allow her to have this sword. They sent it to her. It seemed to her that the sword was not very deeply buried behind the altar ; she could no longer however say if it had lain behind or before the altar ; but she thought that at the time she had written that the sword was behind the altar. When it was found the clergy of the neighbourhood polished it, whereupon the rust fell from it quite easily."—Quicherat, *Procès*, etc., vol. i. p. 76.

made for herself a pennon upon which was depicted the Annunciation.

The news of her return to Chinon and of her impending departure for Orleans began to spread afar. From a well-authenticated piece of evidence, well worthy of attention, we know that as early as the middle of April Joan and her mission began to excite much interest, even far away from the seat of war and from Charles VII.; at Lyons, for example, and Brussels.<sup>1</sup> A letter written from Lyons on the 22nd April certifies that the Maid is with the king and has said to him: "I shall save Orleans, I shall put the English who are besieging it to flight. In the battle I shall myself be wounded before the town by a shaft, but I shall not die of it; and the king will be crowned in Rheims this coming summer." All these predictions were confirmed by events. This letter, be it noted, was received at Brussels and recorded with its date (prior to the events predicted), by the registrar of the Brabant Court of Accounts.

Orleans meanwhile was being daily more closely invested by the English, and the siege seemed on the point of becoming a blockade. Moreover, since even Joan, although assuring them of victory, could

<sup>1</sup> See *Procès*, édit. Quicherat, vol. iv. p. 425. Morosini's *Chronique* testifies that at the same period Joan and her mission were being discussed with the liveliest curiosity at Bruges, Venice, and several other places. Everyone, of course, according to his opinion, spoke of her differently. One Justiani wrote to Venice from Bruges: "Each one adjusts and harmonises her exploits with his own belief or disbelief in her, magnifying or detracting from them according to his fancy."

not tell how long it might be necessary to fight before attaining it, it became apparent to everyone that the most urgent step was to revictual the town. Accordingly a large convoy of provisions was collected at Blois, and a small army commanded by Marshal de Boussac and Gilles de Rais and led by Joan of Arc, was directed to force an entry for it into Orleans. The number of these troops is unknown; or rather it should be said that the estimates are contradictory, varying from three to twelve thousand.

Before beginning the campaign, Joan, wishing for the last time to call upon the English to retire in peace, sent them this message:—

JHESUS. MARIA.<sup>1</sup> King of England, render satisfaction to the King of Heaven. Give up to the Maid the keys of all the good towns which you have seized. She has been sent by God to restore the royal blood, but is full ready to make peace if you will make reparation by restoring (France) and paying an indemnity for having held it. King of England, if you will not do this, I am leader in the war; wheresoever I find your people in France, if they be not willing to obey I will drive them forth willing or no; but if they submit, I will have mercy upon them. Know, that should they refuse to obey, the Maid has come to slay them. She comes from the King of Heaven to put you out of France, man by man; and the Maid promises and assures you that she will sound so great a call to arms as for a thousand years

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<sup>1</sup> Joan did not actually write this letter, since she was unable to write; but it is quite likely that she dictated it, for the style in which it is written is totally unlike the official style of those about her. We have published the text given in the manuscript of the *Geste des Nobles*, and have merely modernised the spelling. That text appears to be the oldest of those which have come into our hands, but several texts of the letter exist. Quicherat published five. (*Procès*, etc., vol. i. p. 240; iv. 139, 215, 396; v. 96.) The discrepancies between them are trifling.

has not been heard in France, if you do not render her justice. And be very sure of this, that the King of Heaven will send her greater power than you can wield in all your assaults upon her and her trusty men-at-arms.

And you, archers, noble and valiant soldiers, who are before Orleans, go home to your own country, as God bids you. And if you will not do this, beware of the Maid and remember the wrongs you have committed. Think not that the right is on your side, for you never will hold France from the King of Heaven, the Son of Mary; but the King Charles shall hold it, the true heir to whom God gave it, and he will enter Paris in goodly company. If you do not believe the messages of God and of the Maid of Orleans, in whatsoever place we find you we will strike a mighty blow and we shall see whose is the better right, yours or God's.

William Pole, Earl of Suffolk, John, Lord Talbot and Thomas, Lord Scales, lieutenants of the Duke of Bedford, so-called Regent of the Kingdom of France for the King of England, make answer, whether you will make peace with the City of Orleans. If not, you will shortly have cause to remember your wrongful deeds. Duke of Bedford, who call yourself regent of France for the King of England, the Maid begs and entreats you not to bring destruction upon your heads. If you do not give her satisfaction she will cause the French to do the greatest deed that was ever done in all Christendom.

Written the Tuesday in Holy Week,<sup>1</sup> to the Duke of Bedford, so-called regent of the kingdom of France for the King of England.

This letter written upon the "Tuesday in Holy Week," that is to say Holy Tuesday, if not antedated, must therefore have been composed on the 22nd March 1429. It was no doubt dictated by Joan at Poitiers, possibly in the presence of the examiners, or at any rate, to be shown to them. At all events it was despatched before the middle of April. As may easily be imagined, it only succeeded

<sup>1</sup> Holy Tuesday, 22nd March 1429.

in infuriating the English who threatened to burn the messenger who delivered it.<sup>1</sup> And yet we cannot help admiring Joan for having made this fruitless effort. After fifteen years of open war an ordinary commander might well have been justified in attacking at once, but Joan, who professed to be sent by God, not to make conquests, or to win glory, but to see a just cause righted, was acting more in accordance with the character of her mission by making a final effort to accomplish it without bloodshed. Though there was no hope of success, it was at least her duty to make the attempt. It was necessary that her impatience for action, which was not impatience for fighting, should not be misinterpreted either by friend or foe. Until the last she persisted in offering peace before having recourse to war, and, after victory, in asking no more than she had asked before. A soldier of justice, she only demands justice, and when justice is done, she will always be ready to lay down her sword. She never threatened the English with revenge or retaliation, she never said to them: "We will pursue you to your island and avenge conquered France by conquering you once more." No such words ever passed her lips; her only plea was: "Give back to France that which you took unlawfully and hold unjustly."

<sup>1</sup> They also threatened to burn the girl who had written it. From the first time they saw her they vowed against her the most fearful hatred. Joan was not disturbed. "Let them burn me if they capture me," said she, "but if I defeat them, let them go away."

## CHAPTER III

### ORLEANS

THEY set out from Blois on Thursday, the 28th April to march to Orleans, Joan of Arc riding at the head of the army, surrounded by priests chanting the *Veni Creator*. Joan wished to follow boldly the right bank of the Loire, although it was strongly occupied by the English. "They will not stir," said she. But the generals, who did not share her confidence, chose the left side of the river which was freer of the enemy. Two leagues up the river they came to Chécy. Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans,<sup>1</sup> commanded the town<sup>2</sup> in the name of his brother, Charles of Orleans, who had been a prisoner since Agincourt.

Dunois came to meet the convoy and saw Joan of Arc for the first time.<sup>3</sup>

"You are the Bastard of Orleans?" she said to him.

"Yes, and I rejoice at your arrival."

"Then it was you who counselled that I should come hither by this side of the river instead of

<sup>1</sup> He only received the title of Comte de Dunois in 1439, but we shall generally call him by the name under which he is so famous.

<sup>2</sup> The Governor was Raoul de Gaucourt.

<sup>3</sup> Evidence of Dunois. *Chronique de la Pucelle*.



going straight on through the district occupied by Talbot and the English."

Dunois tried to excuse himself. "It was my advice and that of the wisest men; we thought it the best and safest course."

"In the name of God," she replied, "Our Lord's counsels are wiser and safer than yours, you thought to deceive me, but you deceive yourself. For I bring the greatest succour that ever came to knight or town, the succour of the King of Heaven. It comes not from me but from God Himself, who at the entreaty of St Louis and St Charlemagne has taken pity upon the town of Orleans."

The provisions were shipped upon some boats which had been sent from Orleans, and the whole convoy, having descended the river without any accident, was landed at the entrance of the town. The English had not stirred. A lack of transport, however, prevented the French army from following the same route, so it was decided to return to Blois, recross the Loire, and approach Orleans from the north, and the right hand bank of the river. Joan agreed with Dunois in not wishing to go far away from the town where she was already awaited with passionate expectation. Accordingly, accompanied by a small escort they crossed the Loire behind the convoy of provisions, and landed at the eastern point of the besieged town.

On the 30th April, at eight o'clock in the evening, clad in full armour and mounted upon a white horse, Joan entered Orleans by torchlight. Before her was borne her standard "likewise white, with

two angels upon it, each holding a fleur-de-lis in his hand; and on the pennon was depicted the Annunciation." The Bastard of Orleans rode on her right hand. Her reception was triumphal. Burghers and soldiers "already felt encouraged and as if no longer besieged." Everyone gazed at her with feelings of love and confidence; they crowded so about her, that a torch set fire to her pennon, which she immediately and with great self-possession extinguished herself. After they had been to the Cathedral to return thanks to the Almighty, they led her to the house of Jacques Boucher, treasurer to the Duke of Orleans, where she was to stay. With her were her two brothers, Pierre and Jean, and the two men-at-arms, Jean de Metz, and Bertrand de Poulangy, who had escorted her from Vaucouleurs.

As she had spent the entire day on horseback without once dismounting, and without food or drink, a supper had been prepared for her; this, however, she did not touch, merely eating five or six pieces of bread, which she soaked in a glass of wine diluted with water. Her abstinence seemed as wonderful as her endurance. Louis de Contes, her page, mentions that it was a frequent occurrence for her to spend an entire day without eating anything but a bit of bread. That night she made the daughter of her host sleep in her bed. Throughout the whole campaign she always tried to have a woman in her room at night. When this was impossible, she slept fully dressed.

It seems incomprehensible that the English should

have allowed Orleans to be reprovisioned in this way, without making any effort to prevent it. They must already have been disturbed, if not alarmed, by the accounts which had reached them of the Maid's supernatural powers. At all events, it is a fact that from the moment Joan came among them, the inhabitants of the beleaguered town proved themselves to be different men. Dunois affirms as much in his evidence. "The day before her arrival, two Englishmen would have put eight Frenchmen of the royal army to flight, but as soon as she had entered the town, four or five hundred of our men would have held their own against the entire English army (about ten thousand men)." The very next day, the besiegers offered no more resistance to the entry of the reinforcements sent from Gien and Montargis than they had to that of the provisions on the previous day. Unmoved they watched the passage of Joan's little army which Dunois went to meet on the road from Blois. The rôles were changed; the besiegers were becoming the besieged; and the defenders of Orleans proceeded to take, one by one, the formidable fortresses which for seven months, the English had been building and fortifying round their walls.

The first of these fortresses to be attacked was that of St Loup, which commanded the upper reach of the river. The attack took place on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 4th May. Joan, who had not been told of it, was resting upon her bed and had even fallen asleep. Suddenly, she awoke and said to Aulon, her steward, "I must go and fight the

English." At the same moment, a great uproar filled the town, and Joan found that they were fighting without having called her. She hastily armed herself, chiding her page<sup>1</sup> for having allowed her to sleep. "Wretched boy (*Sanglant garçon*),<sup>2</sup> not to tell me that the blood of France was being shed!" It was probably on this same day that she said to Jean d'Aulon: "Never have I seen the blood of any Frenchman flow that my hair has not risen upon my head!"

May it be forgiven her by the wise folk of a later generation if the sons of her mother country seemed to her more precious than the sons of strangers. But she was merciful to all, and the fallen foe was sacred to her. A French soldier having one day grievously wounded an English prisoner, Joan dismounted, raised the dying man, and, supporting his head in her hands, made him confess himself, solacing him with comfortable words until he breathed his last.

Scarcely armed, she mounted in hot haste and dashed across the town through a labyrinth of narrow streets, making the sparks fly from her horse's hoofs by the pace at which she rode. When astonishment was expressed that she should have gone straight to the spot where fighting was proceeding, without knowing the way, she said: "My voices wakened me; my voices told me the way." The courage and coolness she displayed in this first

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Louis de Contes, Joan of Arc's page.

<sup>2</sup> A vulgar term of abuse very common in the fifteenth century; meaning no more than *méchant garçon* at the present day.

encounter were marvellous. The English made a desperate resistance. Without taking any personal share in the fighting, Joan stood at the edge of the moat, her standard in her hand, and for three hours urged on the attacking force. When the fortress had been taken and all who were in it either killed or taken prisoners, her womanhood reasserted itself, and she was overwhelmed with pity. "She wept over the slain, at the thought that they had died without confession."<sup>1</sup>

Thursday, the fifth May was Ascension Day, and the officers refused to fight "out of reverence for the day." Joan considered that it would be no sin against God<sup>2</sup> to proceed with the fighting, for was it not Christ Himself who said "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day"? The salvation of France was just as urgent in her eyes, but she yielded to their scruples and set an example to all by keeping holy the festival. She was confessed and received the sacrament, and entreated all the inhabitants, and especially her fellow-soldiers, to confess themselves likewise. Since she had become a leader she considered herself in conscience bound to watch over the spiritual welfare of her troops. She continuously exhorted them to turn from evil, and seek repentance, and had reformed the morals of the army, as far at least as

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of her confessor Pasquerel.

<sup>2</sup> The very accurate *Chronique du siège* confirms this, but Pasquerel, it is true, denies it. It will be seen further on that she also wished to fight on the 8th Sept., the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin, for which she was reproached by her judges.

it was possible. She banished all women of loose character, and loudly proclaimed that God would not award victory to unrepentant sinners. She did her utmost to suppress the licentiousness, blasphemy and pillage around her, and all the abominable excesses which too frequently accompanied them. Without exaggerating the depth or lasting value of the conversions which she made, it is safe to assert that her noble apostleship was not fruitless. She at least succeeded in awakening in the hearts of the soldiers, a lively religious sentiment, a faith in God, an earnestness in prayer, and, if they sincerely wished to deserve it, a hope of salvation.

So little did her first victory elate her, that before following up her success she actually wished to make one more proposal of peace to the English. A second letter was despatched to them by means of an arrow, since they had unlawfully detained her messengers. The English read her letter, and the only answer they vouchsafed was an outburst of insults, the echo of which ascended to the ramparts upon which she stood. When she heard them, "she commenced to sigh and weep bitterly, invoking the aid of the King of Heaven." Shortly afterwards she said that "she was comforted, for her Lord had spoken to her."<sup>1</sup>

On Friday, the 6th May, the fortress of the Augustins was taken by assault with the same valour and the same success. On Saturday, the 7th, they attacked the Tourelles, which commanded the bridge across the Loire to the south of Orleans.

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Pasquerel.

At early dawn Joan rose and armed herself to go to the assault. Her host, who had received a present of a fine shad, said to her: "Joan, let us eat the shad before you go." "In the name of God," answered she, "let no one touch it before supper, for we shall recross the bridge and bring you back a 'Godon'<sup>1</sup> who will eat his share of it with us." Although naturally of a serious disposition, she did not despise those repartees of gay and sprightly humour which used formerly to be distinctive of the French race.

Some of the commanders considered the attack upon the Tourelles imprudent and premature, but Joan's enthusiasm swept every obstacle before it. The attack began at six o'clock in the morning, and both sides fought furiously until the afternoon without much result. About one o'clock, Joan went down into the moat to set a ladder against the wall, and in so doing was wounded by an arrow just above the right breast. At first she was unnerved and began to weep, either from fear or from the pain, but she soon recovered herself, drew out the point with her own hands and seemed to recover her cheerfulness. Some soldiers wanted to "charm"<sup>2</sup> the wound, but she refused, saying, "I would sooner die than do anything I considered to be a sin, or against the will of God. Full well I know that I must die, but I know neither when, nor where, nor how, nor at what hour. If they can dress my wound without

<sup>1</sup> A nickname for Englishmen, because of their oath, "God-dam."

<sup>2</sup> Soothe the pain with magic words.

sin, I am quite willing that it should be dressed." They applied a dressing of olive oil which soothed the pain.

The leaders wished to stop the assault until the following day. She strongly objected to this proposition and, in spite of her wound, returned to the fray after a short prayer. Such heroism in a woman—in a mere child of seventeen—transformed the men who witnessed it into heroes. The French rushed furiously to the attack. The English who believed Joan to have been killed, or mortally wounded, were dumbfounded at seeing her re-appear upon the trench, where, waving her standard, she shouted to her men, "The day is yours! Enter!" The bridge which connected the ramparts with the Tourelles gave way, and several hundreds of the English, among whom was their leader, Glassdale, fell into the water and were drowned. This ended the resistance, and before nightfall the Tourelles were occupied. The enemy, to the number of four or five hundred, lost the whole of their men, killed or taken prisoner. Upon seeing this great slaughter, Joan began to weep, and prayed for the souls of Glassdale and the soldiers who had been drowned with him. The author of the *Journal du Siège* was also afflicted, but from less pious motives. He deplored the number of the dead as a "great misfortune for the valiant French who might have made money out of their ransoms."

On Saturday night Joan entered Orleans amid shouts of joy and triumph. But even she did not yet know the full extent of her victory. During the



night, whilst she was resting and nursing her wound, the English retreated in good order from their strongholds and drew themselves up for battle. In the morning, however, when the French were hesitating whether to accept the challenge that seemed offered them, the enemy suddenly veered round in the direction of Meun. Adhering to her customary moderation, Joan forbade their being pursued. "Let them escape to-day"; she said, "you will catch them some other time." Orleans was now free. Before sunset the inhabitants had finished demolishing and burning the fortresses and had triumphantly brought back the artillery and provisions abandoned by the English. A solemn procession then paraded the streets, going from church to church returning thanks to God for so great a victory. Joan's whole being was filled with joyous thanksgiving to the God who had guided her so well, and had deigned to employ such an humble instrument for the accomplishment of such great deeds. But as if her modesty would fain escape with all speed from the popular enthusiasm, she left Orleans the day after the victory to return to Blois, and from thence to Tours, whither the king came from Chinon to meet her. Charles welcomed her most warmly and evinced his intense delight; but she, kneeling modestly before him, addressed him in the following words: "Noble Dauphin, come and be crowned at Rheims; I am urged to bid you go. Doubt not but that in that city you will be honourably crowned."

It is evident that she was eager to accomplish her mission, being fully conscious and never hesitating

to say (the Duke of Alençon testified to this effect), "that she would not last long, a year perhaps, or scarcely longer." But the more ardour she displayed, the more suspicious the court became. The idea of marching to Rheims, through a district still strongly held by the English garrisons, seemed to all the counsellors of Charles VII. an utter impossibility. The relief of Orleans, no doubt, had been a military event of great importance and one accomplished with astonishing rapidity; and yet to the people at the time it did not appear to be the first act in the resurrection of France, as clearly as it does to us. Satisfied with this one success, the wise men, or those who considered themselves as such, feared to compromise the fruits of it by so soon seeking another victory. Others, of whom La Trémoille, the favourite, was one, were jealous of this triumph of the Maid. Many more were indolent, and feared to face the inevitable difficulties and dangers. Finally there were those who were still stubbornly perplexed about the true nature of Joan of Arc's power. By the English she was believed to be a witch, and some of the French still feared that the English were right. The illustrious Gerson,<sup>1</sup> who died a few weeks later, five days before the coronation, strove to reassure these timid souls, and, judging from every aspect of Joan's mission, asserted without reservation that it was a mission inspired by God. "But," he added, "it is essential to have faith in her whom He sends, otherwise, in spite of her having

<sup>1</sup> A refugee since 1419 at Lyons, in the Monastery of the Célestins, where he died on the 12th July 1429.

been sent by God, she will fail, so that our faithlessness may be punished."

In spite of the weight of such a guarantee, the Court still did not dare to "believe," but continued to hesitate till the end of May. Joan was in despair at seeing so much precious time wasted. After three months of testing, after Orleans had been delivered, they still wearied her with questions and scruples. One day at the Castle of Loches,<sup>1</sup> having suddenly entered the king's apartment while he was deliberating with Christophe de Harcourt, Gerard Machet, his confessor, and Robert de Maçon, the former chancellor, upon what course of action they should decide to pursue, she again entreated him to march to Rheims. "Did your voices tell you this?" asked Christophe de Harcourt. "Yes." "Would you not be willing, here, in the king's presence, to tell us how your counsellors speak to you?" "I quite understand what you wish to know, and I will tell you willingly. When I am displeased because the things that I am commanded by God to say are not believed, I retire alone and I pray to God; and I complain to Him that no one will believe me. And after I have prayed to God, I hear a voice saying to me, 'Daughter of God, go! go! go! I shall be beside thee. Go!' And when I hear this voice I rejoice exceedingly and I would I were always in that state!" These words she spoke with a wonderful exultation, her eyes raised to heaven.

The human heart is so fashioned that those by

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Dunois.

whom the greatest miracles are witnessed are sometimes the most grudging in their admiration. While on the morrow of the relief of Orleans, the counsellors of Charles VII. persisted in refusing to believe in the mission entrusted to the Maid, the report of her exploits was arousing enthusiasm and love far and wide. Christine de Pisan sang of Joan of Arc in her convent at Poissy. In his retreat with the Célestins at Lyons, Gerson was writing, in her behalf, his last book. During the month of May, the Archbishop of Embrun, Jacques Gelu, was engaged in examining, as Gerson had done, whether the Maid's mission had a divine character, and pronounced most energetically in the affirmative. He wished the king and his officers to consult her in everything; and the more weak and impotent God's chosen instrument appeared, the more dread had he of calling down the divine wrath, if this instrument were disdained. In Rome, a Frenchman, the anonymous author of an *Histoire Universelle*,<sup>1</sup> on hearing of the relief of Orleans, burst forth into transports of admiration. He considered this military achievement to be the greatest event which had occurred since the beginning of the world. He affirmed the divine nature of Joan's mission, and announced that she would save France. "For it is God who is working through her; her answers are short and direct; her discretion and behaviour irreproachable. She is free from all superstition, although her enemies accuse her of it. Let no one attribute to the devil the wonders she has

<sup>1</sup> See this extremely curious evidence in the *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, vol. xlv. p. 650 (1885).

worked, since these wonders are in accordance with right, favourable to faith and morality, and justified by the holiness of her life." And so while she was still being discussed at Chinon, she was being eulogised in Rome.

It was at last decided, with Joan's approval, that a small army should be entrusted to her under the command of the young Duke of Alençon (a son-in-law of the Duke of Orleans, who was a prisoner in the hands of the English); that with these troops she should try to recover the positions on the Loire occupied by the English; and that in the event of the campaign being successful, and the road to Rheims, or at any rate the first stages on it, being cleared, an advance should be made to that town to crown the king. The plan seemed a wise one, and Joan herself, in spite of her impatience to accomplish the second part of her mission, recognised the necessity of first clearing the valley of the Loire. At the very beginning of June the preparations for the campaign were energetically begun. Attracted by the Maid's wonderful renown, volunteer reinforcements flowed in to the King of France from every side.

Among these new comers there were two brothers, two young nobles called Guy and André de Laval, who joined Joan of Arc at Selles-en-Berry on Monday, the 6th June. One of them, Guy, gives a vivacious description of his interview with her in a letter dated the 8th June and addressed *to their mother and grandmother*. "I went to her lodgings to see her; she had some wine brought and told me that she

would soon make me drink of it in Paris. It seems something quite divine to see and listen to her. This very Monday she left Selles at vespers,<sup>1</sup> to go to Romorantin, three leagues further on . . . and I saw her, entirely clad in white armour except her head, and holding a little battle axe in her hand, mount a great black charger that plunged and reared violently at the door of her house, and would not allow her to get on its back; upon which she said: 'Lead him to the cross,' which stood before the church close by upon the road. There she mounted without the horse stirring any more than if he had been bound. And then she turned towards the door of the church, which was quite near, and said, in a very womanly voice: 'You priests and clergy, make a procession and prayers to God!' Then she turned back to go her way, saying, 'Forward, forward!' Her standard was folded and carried by a graceful page, and her little battle axe was in her hand."

We have no portrait of Joan of Arc of the slightest authentic value. Even the descriptions of her appearance and her person that have come down to us, are so vague and general that it is impossible for us to picture her to ourselves with any degree of accuracy or truth. The innumerable representations of the heroine are all purely fanciful, and the fancy is rarely happy.<sup>2</sup> Here, at all events, are the

<sup>1</sup> In the evening, or rather, in the afternoon.

<sup>2</sup> It is a pity that the painters and sculptors should wantonly contradict the authentic evidence in their representations of Joan of Arc. They may make her beautiful or ugly—that is their

characteristics pretty well established by concurrence of evidence. Joan of Arc was rather tall—only one witness described her as short, but a woman dressed as a man, unless she is of an exceptional height, may appear small without being really small for her sex. She was strong and well proportioned. There was nothing masculine about her save her gestures; her face was entirely womanly and her voice especially soft.<sup>1</sup> Her hair was black<sup>2</sup> and cropped round the neck. No evidence tells us whether her features were well cut or regular; the rough life of the fields had, no doubt, marred their delicacy, for even the testimonies which praise the fine proportions of her figure and the natural grace of her gait and bearing, admit that she certainly looked a peasant. It is as a peasant that we prefer her, for in this sturdy daughter of the fields we can more easily descry the fine sap of the mother country than in the soft, slender form with which our artists and sculptors have too

affair, and each one gives us what he sees or what he is capable of—but they should not represent her with endless waves of hair flowing down her back, when we know that at the trial she was blamed for nothing so bitterly as for having worn her hair short and cropped round the ears “in man’s fashion.” Her costume is accurately described in the documents of the trial. It consisted of a shift, breeches, tunic, long hose (*caligis*) joined together and fastened to the tunic by twenty eyelet-holes, boots (*sotularibus*) laced high on the outside, a short dress reaching to the knee or thereabouts, a short hood (*capucio*), close-fitting leggings (*ocreis seu housellis*), long spurs, sword, dagger, breastplate, lance, and the rest of the armour worn by men-at-arms.

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Perceval de Boulainvilliers to the Duke of Milan.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of the registrar of La Rochelle.

frequently endowed Joan of Arc, in disregard of all the evidence.

It would, however, be another and an equally grave mistake to impute to Joan of Arc, in no matter how small a degree, anything of the virago. One can discover nothing, absolutely nothing, either in her physical appearance, in her tastes or in her moral sentiments, which may be properly described as masculine; nothing even, I might say, strange as it may seem, which was really military or warlike.

Joan should not be compared with those virile women of ancient or modern times, who had a personal taste for war, and who passionately sought the din of battle and the glory of arms. The majority of these women had from childhood given evidence of masculine tastes, an adventurous temperament and a love of danger. Joan was entirely different. There was not a single incident in her childhood which distinguished her from the other girls of her own age and walk in life; she was merely graver and more pious than the rest. No form of violent exercise seems to have appealed to her; she was neither amazon nor huntress, and we cannot find her, during the year she spent among soldiers, taking part in or even assisting at any military sports of tilt or tournament.<sup>1</sup> By grace and by her own strength of will she became a soldier suddenly, in a day; nothing had previously indicated this vocation,

<sup>1</sup> One day, however, she galloped before the king and the Duke of Alençon, her lance in rest. This was shortly after her arrival at Chinon, when it was necessary for her to show that she was capable of supporting the fatigues of a soldier's life.



nothing had prepared her for it. Or rather, to put the matter differently, can she properly be said to have become a soldier at all—she who was never seen to strike a single enemy with her own hand, and could boast to her judges, when they hypocritically accused her of being “bloodthirsty,” that her hands had never shed blood?

The poet has described magnificently that frenzy of battle which seizes hold of the most humane:—

Voilà que par degrés, de sa sombre démente  
Le combat les enivre ; il leur revient au cœur  
Ce je ne sais quel Dieu qui veut qu'on soit vainqueur,  
Et qui, s'exaspérant aux armées frappés,  
Mêle l'éclair des yeux aux lueurs des épées.<sup>1</sup>

Joan of Arc never experienced this fever of steel striking upon steel, this fierce ecstasy of death dealt or eluded. In that age a battle was still for the most part a mass of duels, but Joan of Arc, it seems, never engaged in single conflict with any enemy. But intrepid and careless of her own life, or trusting, perhaps, in the invisible Angel which hovered over her, she was first in rushing to the attack, her standard in her hand, while the avenging host precipitated themselves behind her through the opening she had made. She was not a fighter ; but the soul of the entire army, or rather the soul of France was incarnate in her fragile body and virgin form. Far

<sup>1</sup> Hugo, *Mariage de Roland*. (See how by degrees with its sullen frenzy the battle intoxicates them ; what God it is I know not who takes possession of their hearts, willing them to conquer, and who, maddened with the clash of arms, mingles the lightning of the eye with the flash of swords.)

from being bloodthirsty, she desired only peace; peace which is the most beautiful of all things except justice. The English must give back France, which they had stolen; but if they should be willing to give it back without war, God be praised. She did not stipulate that Agincourt should be avenged, but only the English should depart, giving France back to her king. Let them only go forth from France and they should not be pursued.<sup>1</sup> That is not the language of a woman whose head is turned by love of warlike exploits. Upon the battlefield she astounded all the soldiers by her dauntless enthusiasm. In the council she surprised the officers by her judgment in military matters, and by a prophetic instinct which frequently enabled her to gain a clearer insight than that even of age or experience. In our own generation, competent judges who have studied her campaigns, declare that there were in her the qualities of a great leader, as well as a certain genius for war.<sup>2</sup> The genius perhaps, but not the love. She loved nothing but France and fought to free her, but war in itself afforded her no pleasure. Once her armour was laid aside and the council finished, she again became gentle, retiring, modest; talking very little, praying much, a devout little peasant girl far more than a youthful warrior. One would have

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Simon Beaucroix, her squire, whom she one day prevented from pursuing the retreating enemy.

<sup>2</sup> Upon this head see an extremely curious statement of the Duke of Alençon (*Procès de réhabilitation*). She excelled, he says, in disposing the troops to advantage, especially the artillery. In this she would have been more than a match for some officers of twenty or thirty years' experience.

thought there were two women in her, yet these two women were really one, who was ever striving to do what it pleased God she should do, and to act the part which it pleased God she should act. "She always seemed ready to listen and instantly to obey."

One proof of her wisdom and her modesty is the fact that even at the very height of her extraordinary success she was never betrayed into the slightest presumption. Fully convinced as she was that God had sent her and that God was guiding her, she never neglected any human precautions. She would have been afraid of tempting Providence by asking for useless miracles merely to repair her carelessness or mistakes. This explains why she took such immense care while on a campaign to avoid surprises,<sup>1</sup> and why she consented so readily to begin the campaign in the Loire valley instead of marching upon Rheims without waiting another day, which is what she at first longed to do. She ever listened to reason, and God rewarded her prudence, for the campaign on the Loire was quite as rapid as the relief of Orleans, and perhaps even more marvellous.

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Perceval de Cagny, steward to the Duke of Alençon, and the earliest historian of Joan of Arc. He wrote about her as far back as 1436.

## CHAPTER IV

### RHEIMS

THE campaign of the Loire was finished in a week. On Saturday, 11th June, the royal army, eight thousand strong, arrived before Jargeau. On Sunday, the 12th, the attack was begun. The Duke of Alençon hesitated to storm the town. "Noble Duke, art thou afraid?" asked Joan; "I have promised thy wife to bring thee back safe and sound." The town defended itself most vigorously. A stone struck Joan upon the helmet and threw her to the ground, but she sprang up immediately, crying, "Up! Up! Friends, Our Lord has condemned the English." The town was taken, and Suffolk, who commanded, was made prisoner. Five hundred English perished, and the survivors capitulated. On the 15th, the French seized the bridge of Meun, and on the 16th, attacked Beaugency, which surrendered on the 17th. An army of reinforcement which had been sent from Paris under the command of Falstolf, but had arrived too late and been obliged to beat a retreat, was pursued and overtaken at Patay on the 18th June. The French were still haunted by the fatal memories of Crécy, Poitiers and Agincourt. The superiority of the English in the field seemed an established fact, and the position they now occupied

was favourable and strong. Joan's army shrank from attacking them. "In the name of God," she said, "we must fight. Were they suspended from the very heavens we should still be able to reach them! Have you good spurs?"—"What!" quoth the Duke of Alençon, "are we then to fly?"—"Nay, it is the English who will fly, but you will need spurs to pursue them." The whole army precipitately followed her, for she had a marvellous influence over the soldiers, and a true leader's gift of animating her followers. The battle was short; one of the two wings of the English army retreated owing to a misunderstanding, and the other was cut to pieces. Four thousand of the enemy were captured or slain. The entire valley of the Loire, as well as Orleans, was now free.

After such wonderful successes one would think that the Court could no longer have refused to believe in Joan of Arc, and that those who were about the king would have supported her as passionately as the people and the army did. Nothing of the sort occurred; the jealousy in La Trémoille's heart persisted and even increased as the Maid's authority in the country became greater. La Trémoille was master of Charles VII., not only because he had been able to acquire absolute personal influence over the weak character of the king, but also because of the money which he had lent him, money which was the principal resource of the exhausted kingdom. The wealthy favourite lent enormous sums to the impoverished prince at very high interest. The sworn enemy of the Constable de Richemont,

whose disgrace he had desired and obtained, La Trémoille had been intensely amazed and mortally alarmed at seeing Joan first of all accept a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men, brought her by Richemont at his own expense, and then intervene between the king and the disgraced constable, promising the latter that she would restore him to favour. Upon this point there was open war between La Trémoille and Joan, and this time Joan was beaten. Richemont was forbidden to present himself before the king and was excluded from the journey to Rheims, which, after much vacillation, the Court had finally decided to undertake.

This is but one example out of a hundred of the obstacles with which Joan's mission constantly found itself confronted. The opposition, secret or declared, which Joan of Arc met with at Court, from almost all the politicians and from many of the military leaders, from her arrival at Chinon until that fatal day when she was taken prisoner (some say betrayed, let us at the least say abandoned), at Compiègne, is an absolutely certain fact. After she had raised the siege of Orléans, they would not follow her to Rheims. After her marvellous campaign on the Loire they still hesitated. It was she who started first and then they were obliged to follow her; but they grumbled as they followed her. At the very first obstacle, before Troyes, they wished to retreat. The town surrendered, and the coronation took place. She wanted to march upon Paris with all possible speed. They turned aside from Soissons towards Château-Thierry, Provins, and

Bray-sur-Seine, and engaged in dilatory negotiations with the Duke of Burgundy. Joan, who had divined the Burgundians' game, wished to return to Paris, and carried off a portion of the army. After a fortnight's delay, the king, acting under compulsion and against his will, slowly followed. The attack took place in the king's absence, and as if under his protest. It failed. Joan, although wounded, wished to persevere but was forcibly removed. She wanted to renew the attack upon the following day; but they destroyed the bridge over which she would have had to pass to reach Paris, and Charles VII. abandoned St Denis and marched off with the entire army in the direction of the Loire. The winter came to an end without Joan having been allowed to attempt anything except a few insignificant efforts which failed owing to the lack of sufficient means to carry them through. In the spring nothing was said to her about renewing the campaign, and without asking the king's leave she escaped from the idle Court. A month later she was captured, and the Archbishop of Rheims wrote to the people of that town, that she had fully deserved her fate. After this the Court mentioned her no more and allowed her to be dragged from one prison to another, to be put in chains, to be judged, condemned and burned, without a word or a sign. The one desire of Charles VII. and his courtiers seemed to be that she should never be spoken of again, and that she should be forgotten. Indeed so completely did it become a rule never to speak of Joan of Arc any more than if she had never

existed, that three years after her death (1434) at a meeting of the States-General at Blois, in an official document which described and thanked God for the victories won by the royal armies since the relief of Orleans, Joan's name is not even mentioned.

Perhaps she had some presentiment of this ingratitude of man when, even at the height of her triumphal progress, she frequently appeared so sad, though she never showed discouragement. She could scarcely help being conscious of the king's misgivings at the beginning of the journey to Rheims, for he would not permit the queen to follow him thither, but sent her to a safe place beyond the Loire not daring to trust her to Joan of Arc and her little army of seven or eight thousand men.<sup>1</sup> It certainly seemed an inadequate force with which to traverse eighty leagues of country almost entirely held by the enemy; and the enterprise would have been a rash one had not the rapid successes of the last two months greatly demoralised the English, and at the same time revived the patriotism and hopes of the royalist party in many towns which, though held in check by their garrisons, had never become English except in name. Possibly the French did not know how much prestige their cause had gained during the two months. They can hardly have done so, seeing that the army of Charles VII. did not dare pass through Auxerre, a town which, though it was in the hands of the Burgundians

<sup>1</sup> Other evidence brings up the army to 12,000, but they had neither money nor provisions.



and kept its gates closed, was not unwilling to reprove the army for a money payment. The 5th July found them before Troyes whose garrison, was partly composed of English and partly of Burgundians. The day before, Joan had despatched to the "burghers and inhabitants" a letter which at first they ridiculed, till the events of the morrow, however, proved to them that it was no longer wise to scoff at the Maid of Orleans. This is the letter: "*Jesus, Maria*,—Very dear and worthy friends, lords, burghers and people of the town of Troyes, Joan the Maid summons you and gives you notice, on behalf of the King of Heaven, her right and sovereign Lord, to render true allegiance and acknowledgment to the noble King of France, who will soon be at Rheims and Paris, no matter who marches against him; and in the good towns of his holy realm, with the help of God, and in all the towns which are to be in his holy Kingdom, and we shall make therein a blessed and lasting peace, in spite of all opposition. I commend you to God."

The "burghers and inhabitants" vouchsafed no answer, but remained silent and distrustful behind their strong walls. There happened to be in Troyes a Franciscan friar,<sup>1</sup> Brother Richard, a very celebrated preacher, who had recently left Paris, whence he had been banished by the English, who were uneasy at his brilliant reputation. He wished to meet Joan. Everyone about him spoke of her as a witch, and when he came to the royal

<sup>1</sup> According to other evidence, Brother Richard was an Augustinian.

camp, Joan saw him approaching her warily, making the sign of the cross and sprinkling holy water as he drew near. "Approach fearlessly," she cried to him, "I shall not fly away." He returned, marvelling at her, but all his eloquence failed to persuade the people of Troyes to throw open their gates to the King and to the Maid.

The French had neither provisions enough to blockade the town nor instruments with which to besiege it. They were greatly perplexed and the king's council already discussed the advisability of retreating. Joan, after many entreaties, obtained two days' grace, promising that before they were over, the town would have surrendered.

Owing to a lucky and audacious stroke, the entire credit of which is due to Joan, this actually happened. Without any adequate means of attacking, she gave orders that everything should be made ready for an assault. Her standard in her hand she walked alone towards the moat; thousands of men followed her in confusion, but filled with ardour. She commanded them to make fascines with which to fill up the ditch, and they were at work upon them the whole of that day and the following night. The next morning she had the first fascines thrown down, crying: "To the assault!" But the bishop and the burghers at once offered to capitulate, and on Sunday, the 10th July, while the garrison went out by one gate the king entered by the other.

Joan had never shown more good sense in her apparent temerity. She was the only person in the royal army who realised that her power did not lie

merely in the sword or the arrow, or in engines of siege; but that she was pre-eminently a moral force; that the sign of God was on her brow; and that almost without any material resources, but with the help of that sacred prestige, she could accomplish things which clever, wise men reduced to ordinary measures, dared not even conceive. It is certain that Troyes was taken because she pretended to attack it; but the successful result of this feint is a testimony alike to her faith in God and in her mission, and to her excellent sense of what the time and the circumstances required.

The surrender of Troyes involved the surrender of Chalons-sur-Marne, and that in its turn involved the surrender of Rheims. Although Rheims was nominally subject to the English king, the majority of its inhabitants were in the habit of praying for Charles VII. They were now freed from foreign garrisons and at once inspired and protected by the example of Troyes and Chalons. Accordingly, on the 16th July, when the leading men were informed that the King of France was within four leagues of their town, in spite of all the letters, threats and promises of the English and the Burgundians, they despatched a deputation to him entreating him to enter. This he did on the same day, and on the next day, Sunday, the 17th July 1429, Charles VII. was solemnly crowned in his own cathedral of Rheims, by the hand of its archbishop. The six lay peers and three of the ecclesiastical peers who should have played their parts in the ceremony were wanting, but their

places were filled by others, and, considering how hastily it was prepared and performed, the coronation of Charles VII. has nevertheless remained famous among all other ceremonies of the same kind which France has witnessed. That is because we always see in it the figure of Joan of Arc, as she stood beside the king, holding her standard in her hand, "for as it had shared in the toil, it was just that it should share in the glory." When the picture of that scene is evoked in the mind, it effaces all the splendours of the many other royal coronations upon which France has lavished her treasure.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the ceremony was not without brilliancy. Three noblemen from Anjou who were present at the coronation gave the following description of it in a letter written to the Queen of France, and her mother, the Queen of Sicily: "It was a mighty fine thing to see the great ceremony, for it was as solemn, and the king found everything as well and as properly appointed (such as royal garments and things appertaining thereto) as if he had ordered it a year beforehand, and there were so many people that it would be endless to write of them, and there was great joy felt by everybody. . . . And during the said ceremony the Maid of Orleans kept always near the king, holding her standard in her hand. And it was a very fine sight to see the beautiful manners of the King and also of the Maid. And when the king was anointed and also when they placed the crown on his head, everyone cried "Noel!" and the trumpets sounded in such a way that it seemed as if the roof of the church must fall." Among the spectators we must not forget Joan's father, Jacques d'Arc, whose presence in Rheims on the day of the coronation and on the following days is vouched for by the town accounts. But we know nothing about the meeting between father and daughter after a separation of six months which had brought so many changes. One can hardly doubt, however, that if Jacques d'Arc came from Domremy to Rheims to meet Joan of Arc, it was because he had forgiven her and was proud of such a daughter.

"As soon as the Maid saw that the king was anointed and crowned, she knelt down before him in the presence of all the courtiers, and clasping his knees, said to him, while the hot tears rained down her face: 'Noble King, now has been accomplished the will of God, which was that I should raise the siege of Orleans and bring you to this city of Rheims to receive your fitting coronation, showing that you are the true king and he to whom the Kingdom of France should belong.' And all those who were watching her were greatly touched."<sup>1</sup>

This account does not tell us that, on the evening of the coronation day, Joan begged the king to send her home, declaring that her mission was now fulfilled.<sup>2</sup> Upon this exceedingly delicate point the evidence seems contradictory and historians are at variance. Nothing could be more interesting than the very comprehensive deposition of Dunois in the case for rehabilitation. He says that a few days after the coronation, when passing with the king through Crépy-en-Valois (the 10th August 1429), the people came out in crowds to meet the cortège, shouting, "Noel!" Joan, who was riding between the Archbishop of Rheims and Dunois, said to them: "These are worthy people and never have I seen such great rejoicings at the arrival of so noble a king. Would to God I might be fortunate enough, when I die,

<sup>1</sup> *Journal du Siège* and *Chronique de la Pucelle*. In the latter no mention is made of Orleans.

<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting to know, but we are absolutely ignorant, whether Jacques D'arc, Joan's father, who was present at Rheims on the day of the coronation, exhorted his daughter to stay with the king or to return to her parents.

to be buried in this country." "Ah, Joan," said the Archbishop, "in what place do you hope to die?" "Wherever it pleases God; for I am no more certain than you are of the time or the place. Would to God my Creator, that I might retire now and lay aside my arms, to go and serve my father and my mother and tend the sheep with my sister and brothers, who would rejoice greatly at seeing me once more."

This statement gives the impression that Joan of Arc considered that with the coronation her mission was ended. But it contradicts other evidence of equal importance. It seems as if Joan herself must have varied in the manner in which she explained her mission, representing it at times as so extensive that she proclaimed schemes for crusades and for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, and reducing it at others to four principal objects, two of which had already been accomplished: the relief of Orleans; the coronation of the king; the recovery of Paris; and the freedom of the Duke of Orleans, whom England had held prisoner for fourteen years and was destined to hold for eleven years more.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, as on this occasion when she replied in the above manner to the Archbishop of Rheims, Joan seemed to think that after Orleans had been relieved and the king anointed and crowned, her mission was accomplished.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Seguin.

<sup>2</sup> At Chinon she promised to set the Duke of Orleans free. (Evidence of Perceval de Cagny.) She was much attached to the Duke of Alençon, son-in-law of the Duke of Orleans. She went to Saumur to see the Duchess of Alençon before the campaign of the Loire and promised to bring her husband back to her safe and sound.

A curious statement made by Dunois in his evidence at the trial for rehabilitation enables us to find a likely explanation of these divergencies. "When she spoke playfully (*jocose*)," he said, "she promised exploits which were not all realised. When she spoke seriously of her mission, she restricted it to the relief of Orleans and the coronation of the king."

And certainly, without taking into account the designs of Providence, which are not known to us, or the commands which Joan received and rightly or wrongly interpreted, but merely judging from the point of view of human prudence (frequently too limited a one, I admit), it would have been wiser of Joan of Arc to stop on the morrow of the triumph at Rheims. Was it possible for a mission of enthusiasm to last for an indefinite period? Was not a purely supernatural prestige bound to lose its power through familiarity? Had God promised an uninterrupted succession of victories? Was it not tempting providence to expect or demand it? Moreover, would not a single reverse destroy the power of one who, professing to be the direct emissary of God, should have been invincible? Our admiration makes us better judges to-day, but that is after the lapse of five centuries.

To us it seems that the stake adds somewhat to the glory of the heroine, but time only can thus purify our judgments. Contemporaries, on the other hand, lose faith for the most part in a cause which they see defeated. How many people, on learning of the martyrdom at Rouen, must have exclaimed:

"She who was to have saved France did not know how to save herself!"

But on the day after the coronation, after those three months which had been a progress from one miracle to another, who could have descended to timid calculations of human prudence? And if it was tempting God to demand more miracles than He had promised, would it not have been doubting Him to stop so soon, before the task was completed, as if fearing that "the Lord's hand had waxen short?" Joan's own zeal and hopes increased two-fold. On the 17th July, the day of the coronation, she sent an urgent, almost haughty letter to the Duke of Burgundy, calling upon him to make his peace with the King of France. "Mighty and redoubtable Prince, Joan the Maid bids you, on behalf of the King of Heaven, my righteous and sovereign Lord, that the King of France and you make a good and firm peace, which will last for long. Forgive one another freely and sincerely, as faithful Christians should. And if it pleases you to war, war against the Saracens." In the event, however, of the duke refusing and remaining obdurate, she assured him that his defeat was inevitable, no matter what forces he brought against the legitimate King and the Maid. "She made no doubt that Paris would shortly be reduced to submission."<sup>1</sup> And all the people, at any rate in the early days following the coronation, shared this confidence, and believed that they already

<sup>1</sup> Letter of three noblemen of Anjou to the Queen of France and the Queen of Sicily, bearing the date of the day of the coronation (17th July 1429).



saw the capital throwing itself open to its king almost without a struggle. The aged Christine de Pisan, an Italian woman whose attachment to France was touching in its voluntary fidelity, came out of her retreat and broke a continuous silence of eleven years to compose in honour of the heroine a triumphal hymn overflowing with hope and enthusiasm. The piece is dated the 31st July, two weeks after the coronation.

L'an mil-quatre-cent-vingt-et-neuf  
 Reprit à luire le soleil . . .  
 Or faisons fête à notre roi ;  
 Que très bien soit-il revenu ! . . .  
 Une fillette de seize ans  
 (N'est-ce pas fors nature ?)  
 A qui armes ne sont pesant  
 Ains semble que sa nourriture  
 Y soit, tant y est forte et dure ;  
 Et devant elle vont fuyant  
 Les ennemis ; ne nul n'y dure . . .  
 Mais tout ce fait Dieu qui la mène . . .  
 N'apercevez-vous, gent aveugle,  
 Que Dieu a ici la main mise ? . . .  
 Voulez-vous contre Dieu combattre . . .  
 C'est pour néant ; rendre leur faut,  
 Veuillent, ou non ; n'y a si forte  
 Resistance, qui a l'assaut  
 De la Pucelle ne soit morte . . .  
 O Paris, très mal conseillé,  
 Fols habitants sans confiance !  
 Aimes-tu mieux être essilié  
 Qu'à ton prince faire accordance . . .  
 Car ens entrera, qui qu'en grogne ;  
 La Pucelle lui a promis.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> (In the year 1429 the sun begun to shine again . . . let us hold festival in honour of our king's return. A maiden of sixteen

This document is a striking example of the confidence and enthusiasm which was universally felt after the coronation. People seemed already to see the king in Paris, the English banished, and France liberated. Not content with this, they dreamed of victorious retaliation, they pictured the Saracens defeated, the Holy Sepulchre reconquered by the invincible armies of the King of France and of the Maid. The defeat before Paris and the six months' long inaction which followed shattered these illusions; disenchantment soon set in, quickly followed by ingratitude; and because it was impossible for Joan to do everything at once, they soon began to ask at court whether she had ever really done anything at all.

years (does it not seem impossible?), to whom the weight of arms is not a burden, but rather, it would seem, a source of nourishment, so strong and hardy is she; before her the enemy flies; none can withstand her. . . . But this is the work of God who guides her. . . . Do you not see, blind folk, that this is the hand of God? Would you fight against God? It is idle. You must yield whether you will or not. Resistance, however strong, dies at the Maid's assault. O Paris, ill-advised, foolish inhabitants without faith! Do you prefer to be sacked rather than welcome your Prince. . . . For he will make his entrance in spite of all your grumbling; the Maid has promised him.)

## CHAPTER V

### PARIS AND COMPIÈGNE

WE have already seen that on the very evening of the coronation day three noblemen of Anjou<sup>1</sup> wrote from Rheims to the queen, Mary of Anjou, and to the queen's mother, Yolande of Anjou. "To-morrow," they said, "the king is to start on his way towards Paris. . . . The Maid has no doubt but that she will bring Paris to submission." The report was accurate enough except that they should have further added: "Joan and her officers wish to march upon Paris; but the king and his council are against it. The king and the court follow the army, but they do so under protest and reluctantly." Thus, whether Joan did or did not firmly believe that the conquest of Paris was part of her mission, it is at least certain that the king did not detain her after the coronation, but that it was her own desire to stay and continue the war.

The court, weary of campaigning, would have preferred to enter into negotiations, and was in fact already negotiating with the Duke of Burgundy who, either through disgust at the English alliance or alarm at the victories of Charles VII., or possibly merely as a ruse to gain time and see what course

<sup>1</sup> Their names are unknown.

events were likely to take, signed a truce with the King of France, and gave hopes of a permanent peace and the reconciliation of the two branches of the royal house. In that case Paris, whose master he proclaimed himself and perhaps really believed himself to be, would not fail to open its gates to Charles VII. The court made a grave mistake in listening to these fine but vague promises.

It so happened that an unbroken succession of easily won victories kept up the royal illusion during the early days which succeeded the coronation. All the towns between Rheims and Paris delivered up their keys to the King of France, without a battle and without even having been called upon to do so. Soissons, Laon, Château-Thierry, Provins, Coulommiers opened their gates, and precious time was wasted in receiving their submission. Bedford, meanwhile, was busy taking to Paris reinforcements brought from England, and on the 10th August he defied Charles VII. in an insulting letter in which he denied him the royal title and loaded Joan of Arc with abuse. Four days later the two armies found themselves face to face before Senlis, but no battle took place; the English who were very strongly entrenched, refused to leave their positions, and the French did not dare to attack them. The following day, the 16th August, the English returned in good order to Paris. Beauvais then surrendered to Charles VII. in spite of its bishop, Peter Cauchon, whose sympathies were entirely with the English. Cauchon fled to his masters, vowing vengeance. We know that he kept his word. Compiègne

surrendered on the 17th August, then Senlis. Notwithstanding the irresolution and vacillation displayed in this extraordinary campaign and the intrigues and negotiations (both open and secret) which incessantly thwarted the military tactics and rendered the movements of the army a matter of chance, conspicuous advantages remained on the French king's side, and the victorious march, which had lasted for four months, had not yet lost its prestige.

Under such circumstances, the question was whether to attack Paris. The king and his councillors were certainly strongly opposed to this course. On the other hand, the Duke of Alençon and most of the commanders considered the occasion a favourable one. Joan of Arc shared their opinion, or rather had made them accept hers. Her voices did not require her to undertake this, neither did they forbid it. Her evidence upon this point is very precise, and should be recorded.

“Asked whether, when she went to Paris, she had had any revelation from her voices bidding her go, she replied that she had not, but that the attack had been made at the instance of some noblemen who wished to have a skirmish or a trial of arms, and were fully determined to make their way through and pass the trenches.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, at the risk of irritating the judges, several of whom had been in Paris on the day when she attacked the St-Honoré gate, Joan of Arc refused to let it be believed that she had merely wished to

<sup>1</sup> Examination on the 13th of March.

make an empty demonstration before the town. No doubt the means at the disposal of the royal army were entirely insufficient to enable them to besiege and take a place like Paris in the regular way; but surely Joan had reason to count upon other assistance. Paris was exceedingly divided. The English were hated there even by the Burgundians; the Duke of Bedford was so execrated that he thought he was helping the cause of his nephew, the king, by leaving the town upon the approach of Charles. Some account, too, must be taken of the feelings which must have been aroused in the people's minds. The son of the old French kings was at hand, with all the prestige of his recent coronation; and old memories had been awakened in Paris, a city which had long been loyal and had been miserable ever since she had lost the ancient dynasty to which she was bound by a thousand ties. We may fairly say that, though Joan's daring enterprise ended in failure, it is possible and even probable it would have succeeded if her party had been willing to persevere in it.

She left Compiègne with the Duke of Alençon on the 23rd August; and on Friday the 26th, St-Denis was occupied without opposition.<sup>1</sup> The king followed his army slowly and from afar, as if he did not dare either to disown it or to lead it. He

<sup>1</sup> According to the Duke of Alençon it was at St Denis that Joan broke the sword of St Catherine, by striking with the flat side of it a woman of loose character whom she was driving out of the army. Superstition believed that her luck deserted her with the loss of this enchanted weapon; even the chronicler, Jean Chartier, believed this to have been the case. It is extraordinary

reached St-Denis on the 7th of September, the intervening fortnight having been wasted in futile skirmishes. The next day, although it was a feast day (the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin), Joan of Arc wished to begin the attack. She selected the St Honoré gate which stood on the site of the present Place du Théâtre Français, and led the assault with her customary valour. The first barrier was carried, and they came to the edge of the ditch, into which Joan, her standard in her hand, was the first to plunge, although the enemy were hurling all kinds of projectiles from the top of the walls. They passed the first ditch, but the second, which was filled with water, presented a more difficult obstacle. Joan paused at the brink, sounded the depth of the water with the pole of her standard, and shouted to the soldiers to bring some fagots. Just at that moment a shaft from a crossbow pierced her thigh, but she bore the pain bravely and continued to urge her men to fill the moat. Night, however, was closing in, and Joan's wound had disheartened the army. The leaders ordered a retreat. Joan refused to stir, but, protesting to the last, was forcibly removed by the Duke of Alençon; and she always declared that if they had persevered the town would have been taken. She certainly believed this, and perhaps she was right. But after this first reverse, which seems to have been quite expected, the confusion on every side of her was general. The king gave a fatal example by writing to his "good towns" a circular letter, informing that living in a society steeped in superstition, Joan should never have shown the slightest trace of it in her words or actions.

them of the truce concluded with his cousin the Duke of Burgundy, and announcing that, with the desire of relieving the country, he was taking his army across the Seine, intending to return with a larger force "to pursue the remainder of his conquests and the recovery of his inheritance." Joan of Arc sadly laid down her arms upon the altar of the Holy Virgin in the Abbey of St-Denis and followed the deplorable retreat which put an end to her victories.

They passed through Lagny and Provins, crossed the Yonne near Sens, which kept its gates closed to them, proceeded by Courtenay and Montargis and reached Gien on the 21st September. Scarcely had the royal army departed from St-Denis, leaving an insignificant garrison behind it, when the English re-entered without opposition and once more took possession of the town and the abbey. Joan's armour was carried back to Paris as a trophy. No doubt the re-occupation of St-Denis was not of much importance as a military event, but the moral effect of it was great. It was the first to be lost of the conquests which the king had made during the previous four months. After the marvellous rise the descent had begun.

Joan of Arc had every reason to protest against the Duke of Alençon when he forcibly dragged her away from the St Honoré gate. Her heroic determination to remain, wounded and helpless, beside the moat which cut her off from Paris is evidence enough that she knew better than the officers the gravity of the proposed decision to retreat.

This was the first time since the 1st May that



a backward move had been made. It is, of course, in war often both wise and politic to retreat one day so as to be able the better to advance the next. But this was not an ordinary war; it was a holy war guided by faith and maintained by enthusiasm. This character was lost by the retreat, and the army by its shifting and evasive action seemed to admit that God was no longer with them. It might perhaps have been wiser (although this is not our opinion) not to have attacked Paris, not to have risked themselves with so small a force against so formidable a foe, against a town in which hatred for the "Armagnacs" was still implanted in the hearts of all the lower classes and the majority of the middle classes (evidence of this hatred was but too apparent at the trial of Joan of Arc); but since, rightly or wrongly, they had had the audacity to attack Paris, it was a very great mistake to retreat after the first repulse. Rather should they have struggled on desperately before its walls even at the risk of perishing in the act.

There is nothing to prove, however, that they would have perished. The king also had followers in the town, less numerous, it is true, but resolute, energetic and powerful. It would not have been difficult to stir up internal dissensions by which the royal cause would have profited. The coronation had altered the opinions of one portion at least of the clergy. The recovery of St-Denis must have appealed vividly to the imagination of the people, for by recovering the tomb of the protector of his race the King of France seemed to them to have asserted his

rights. The prestige of the Maid would even have stood the test of a protracted siege, but was it not almost bound to be seriously compromised by an unsuccessful attack followed by a hasty retreat?

On the whole we think there was wisdom in Joan's apparent rashness. She wished the army to remain before Paris, or at least to hold St-Denis; but she met with no support in these bold schemes, and found herself obliged to yield to the weakness of the king and the intrigues of the courtiers. We say intrigues, because, though everyone concurred in disregarding Joan's advice, this was certainly not due to cowardice or even to excess of caution, but rather to jealousy and mistrust. Even the officers began to think that this girl had done enough, that it was time she should return to her native village or else retire to the background. They were tired of being eclipsed by her and even of winning victories under her leadership. The pitiful story of the eighteen months which Joan still had to live is explained by the jealousy which, in spite of all her modesty, gentleness and humility, she had succeeded in arousing. That her companions in arms actually betrayed her as some people have pretended, is untrue; but several of them had already betrayed her in their hearts, and her imprisonment, trial and martyrdom, which filled her enemies with such keen delight, did not perhaps cause so very much sorrow to her so-called friends.

The winter, idle and uneventful, passed heavily for Joan of Arc. While the king, content at being able

to relapse into his customary state of indolence, was journeying from town to town and from castle to castle through the loyal provinces (Berry, Tourraine and Poitou), Joan was allowed, in order to satisfy her generous impatience, to go and take a small stronghold (St Pierre-le-Moutier), and to besiege la Charité-sur-Loire,<sup>1</sup> the taking of which would have been an event of greater importance. As, however, she was not entrusted with sufficient troops or any siege apparatus, she failed in the attempt, and, finding herself short of money and provisions, was obliged to return without having taken la Charité. She was not blamed for this, for the one desire of the court seemed to be to prolong the inaction. It may have been in order to console her (they greatly misjudged her if they imagined it would do so), or possibly it was merely meant to do her honour, that a few days later, on the 29th of December 1429, Charles VII. ennobled the Maid<sup>2</sup> and all her family. Her coat of arms<sup>3</sup> bore the lilies of France, and from it her brothers derived and retained the name of Du Lis. She, however, without disdaining her king's gift, remained simply Joan of Arc, or the Maid, and never bore any other title. After fighting for six months among so many brave men of noble birth she must have respected rank, and it would be childish to attribute to her democratic sentiments which were unknown to the

<sup>1</sup> In November 1429.

<sup>2</sup> At the trial she asserted that this had been done "at the desire of her brothers and by no request of hers."

<sup>3</sup> Azure, on two fleur de lis or, a sword argent with hilt or.

age in which she lived.<sup>1</sup> Still, she was too high minded, too disinterested and too humble of heart for us to suppose her capable of a vulgar ambition even though it were a legitimate one. She did not fight for honours or even honour itself, but for God and for her country.

The court, therefore, at least to all outward appearances, remained respectful towards Joan of Arc and apparently grateful for her service. The populace had lost none of its natural and enthusiastic admiration for her, and during the winter Joan met with innumerable proofs of it. She submitted to her popularity only with reserve. She wished the people to believe that she was sent by God, inspired by Him and guided by the angels, but she was greatly displeased and shocked at anything which seemed to attach any particular virtue to her personally. The cheers of the populace were very sweet to her, and she delighted in the blessings bestowed upon her as she passed, but she refused to be treated as a saint, and vehemently repulsed all acts of adoration. Upon one occasion, when a woman<sup>2</sup> held out some rosaries, asking her to touch them, she laughingly replied: "Touch them yourself; they will be just as good." Her judges accused her of having tried to make people believe that she had brought back a child to life. Joan of Arc protested against the accusation; she had merely prayed, with all the maidens and women of Lagny, that the child, who ap-

<sup>1</sup> Perceval de Boulainvilliers, in the letter addressed to the Duke of Milan, says that "she loves the soldiers and the nobles, but avoids large companies and noisy gatherings."

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Marguerite La Touroulde.

peared to be dead, might revive sufficiently to be baptised.<sup>1</sup>

She had all the more reason to guard herself in this way from imprudent and excessive demonstrations of popular favour because of the intriguers and fanatics who crowded around her, trying to compromise her and to associate either their frauds or their chimeras with her sacred cause. Not to mention the very noisy priest, Brother Richard, who, ever since she was at Troyes, had insisted upon following her, many false prophetesses came to her, endeavouring to identify their follies with her mission. A woman from la Rochelle, Catherine by name, pretended that a white lady had appeared to her and had revealed the spot where lay hidden treasures to be given to the Maid. Brother Richard considered that she should by all means be listened to. Joan bade her return to her husband, and look after her house and her children. The visionary was so persistent that she forced Joan into watching with her during two nights for the white lady who never came. Joan dismissed this madwoman, but she was censured for the episode.

Towards the middle of April (Easter that year fell upon the 16th) Joan of Arc resumed the campaign. Melun had just surrendered to the King of France. Thither Joan betook herself, and it was there that her "voices" first announced to her that she would be taken prisoner before Midsummer Day, a melancholy prediction which from that moment was

<sup>1</sup> She neither said that he was dead, nor that he was not dead ; she said that he gave no sign of life, and that he was black in the face.

almost daily repeated to her. As neither the place nor the hour was revealed to her, however, she did not lose courage and resolved to continue the campaign. At Lagny she captured a convoy of four hundred English, commanded by Fraquet d'Arras, a man of gentle birth, but a veritable brigand whose hands were soiled with murder and plunder. She allowed him to be judged, condemned and executed by the bailiff of Senlis, and this execution was in after years unjustly represented by her judges as manslaughter. Whatever may have been the guilt of Fraquet d'Arras, a man whose infamy seems to be clearly proved, Joan of Arc cannot be held responsible for his condemnation, which was pronounced according to legal forms.

The truce with the Burgundians having ended at Easter, Philip the Good was anxious to assure himself of the possession of Compiègne, which not unnaturally appeared necessary to him to strengthen his position in Paris, where the English king had established him as his lieutenant. With incredible stupidity, which in anyone else but the king might have been termed treason, Charles VII. had secretly consented to allow the Burgundians to enter the town; but the burghers of Compiègne, who were better royalists than the king himself, kept their gates stubbornly closed. The Burgundians determined to besiege the town and Joan of Arc determined to defend it.<sup>1</sup> She entered it on the 24th

<sup>1</sup> The prestige of Joan of Arc's name was still almost unimpaired, and perhaps more among the enemy than among the French. In London, the English soldiers, "terrified at the Maid's enchant-

of May at sunrise. Guillaume de Flavy was in command, and displayed great resolution and fidelity. At five o'clock in the evening of the same day she resolved to attempt a sortie to drive the enemy from the positions they occupied on the right bank of the Oise, but, after having gained some slight advantage, her little troop of about five hundred men was repulsed by the Burgundians, who were in far greater force. Remaining herself with the rear-guard, Joan retreated, in good order at first, along the long roadway which stretched across a low watery meadow to the city gates. The Burgundians, emboldened by their success, followed in hot pursuit, seeking to cut off her retreat. Friends and foes poured in hopeless confusion towards the gates, through which most of the French succeeded in passing except the rear guard, among whom was Joan, which was left struggling to force a passage. Those who had remained behind in the town dared not fire, for fear of killing their own men. The struggling mass drew nearer and nearer, and the gate was still open, when Guillaume de Flavy, seized with panic lest the enemy should enter pell-mell with the French, had the drawbridge raised and the portcullis lowered. Joan was left outside with a few brave men who were resolved

ments," refused to embark for France, and Gloucester was obliged to deal rigorously with these defaulting recruits. The Burgundian chronicler, Chastelain, said: "The name of the Maid was so great and so famous that everyone feared it as a thing of which one knew not how to judge either for good or for ill; but she had already worked and achieved so much that her enemies dreaded her, and those of her own party adored her."

to perish by her side. A crowd of Burgundians surrounded them, summoning them to surrender. An archer of the bastard of Wandonne in the service of John of Luxembourg clutched Joan of Arc roughly by her garments, causing her to fall from her horse. She was taken prisoner with her brother Pierre, the ever faithful d'Aulon,<sup>1</sup> and Poton de Xaintrailles.

Had she been betrayed, delivered and sold by Guillaume de Flavy the governor of Compiègne? Many contemporaries believed this to have been the case and several historians still believe it.<sup>2</sup> Flavy eventually came to a not very respectable end, but nothing could be less likely than that he deliberately betrayed Joan of Arc. It should be remembered that this same man bravely held his

<sup>1</sup> This faithful Jean d'Aulon had not left her for a single day since the king had confided her to his charge. He was one of the few who never doubted her. At the rehabilitation trial he said that "all Joan's deeds seemed divine and miraculous, and that it was impossible for a young maid to have done such deeds without the will and guidance of our Lord."

<sup>2</sup> It has often been related upon the authority of a sixteenth century book (*le Miroir des femmes vertueuses*), which founds the story on the evidence given in 1498 (sixty-eight years after the event) by two old men nearly ninety years old, to the effect that on the morning on which she was captured, Joan of Arc had attended Mass and received the communion in the Church of St Jacques, and afterwards had said to some of the townspeople and a band of children assembled in the church: "My children and dear friends, I tell you that I have been sold and betrayed and that I shall soon be condemned to die. And therefore I entreat you to pray God on my behalf, for never again shall I have the power to serve the king or the kingdom of France." This romantic tale, however, is not in the least authentic.



own in Compiègne until the middle of October—that is, for more than six months—and finally succeeded in keeping for the King of France the town entrusted to his honour. Is it likely that a Frenchman capable of betraying Joan of Arc would not at the same time have surrendered Compiègne? It is far more likely that he raised the drawbridge to save the town, without thinking of the Maid, and not realising that the capture of Joan of Arc was a greater disaster for the king and a worse disgrace than the loss of the town. His conception of his duty was wrong, fatal, even shameful, if you will, but he was not a deliberate traitor; and Joan of Arc, who in her prison had but one thought, to escape and fly to the rescue of besieged Compiègne, absolved Flavy by that touching proof of her devotion.

And if this crime of Flavy's, conscious or unconscious, is an everlasting blot upon his memory, it is but fair that the responsibility of it should be shared by a crowd of secret, but by no means obscure accomplices—the king and all the court for example—who had taught him to believe that the fate of the Maid was a matter of small importance. Joan of Arc lived for a year and five days after this, and if during that time Charles VII. or any of his courtiers took the trouble to find out what had become of her, we certainly have not been able to discover anywhere the slightest trace of such solicitude.<sup>1</sup>

Joan of Arc was now defeated and a prisoner. It is not our intention to decide between the historians

<sup>1</sup> Some arguments to the contrary recently produced have little weight. See below, p. 87 *n.*

who have discussed (somewhat heatedly at times) whether the attack upon Paris and the defence of Compiègne were or were not included in Joan's mission. Since it failed, it is plain, according to some, that God had not sent her there. According to others, the failure was due to the fault of man, and God had promised victory only on the condition that it was merited. The discussion seems to us an idle one. We confess that we do not know exactly the limits of the mission entrusted to Joan of Arc, but it appears to us that the victory of Orleans, the triumph of Rheims, the repulse before Paris and the disaster of Compiègne, could all have equally belonged to it. Defeat does not make Joan of Arc any the less great; her imprisonment does not condemn her. On the contrary, adversity hallows her virtue and her saintliness, and her shameful martyrdom puts a seal upon them. Let us not pay attention to those who are shocked by the sight of misfortune, for we must remember that most of the Saints have ended their earthly life in martyrdom, not in apotheosis.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PRISON

WE have already stated—and we repeat the statement here because the indisputable fact has been disputed wrongly and on insufficient grounds<sup>1</sup>—that during the period of a year and five days, from the 24th May 1430, the day upon which Joan of Arc was taken prisoner, until the 30th May 1431, the day upon which she was burned, one cannot

<sup>1</sup> M. Du Fresne de Beaucourt following d'Averdy and M. de Beaurepaire, has tried to defend Charles VII. The arguments alleged reduce themselves to this, that any effort would have been useless. M. de Beaurepaire considers that any intervention on the part of the king would only have compromised Joan of Arc. Considering the result of the trial, the argument is strange. It is also stated that the University of Paris (*Lettre au duc de Bourgogne*) expressed a fear that the enemies of this prince might attempt to take Joan from out of the hands of John of Luxembourg. But we think its agitation was uncalled for. It has been asserted that any military action was impossible ; no proofs for this, however, are furnished. In short, the defenders of Charles VII. are reduced to alleging that if he did nothing, it was doubtless because there was nothing he could do. A poor apology !

The question has recently been reopened. The *Chronique de Morosini* has been unearthed and is being published in parts by MM. Germain Lefèvre-Pontalis and Léon Dorez for the *Société de l'Histoire de France*. Vols. i. and ii. have appeared ; vol. iii. will contain the passages relating to Joan of Arc. It is pretended that this chronicle bears testimony to efforts made by Charles VII.

find the slightest authentic evidence of a single step, military or diplomatic, having been taken or even attempted by Charles VII. or any of his people, to save Joan from the fate which awaited her, from the terrible death which her enemies had sworn to make her suffer. The weakness and cowardice of the court are not a sufficient explanation for her abandonment; the real cause for it should be recognised and stated, which was—deliberate ingratitude.

Just as the English were ashamed of having been beaten by a woman, the French, or rather the courtiers and several of the officers, were ashamed of having been saved by one. They considered that the time had come to show the world that they no to save Joan of Arc. But is this chronicle of much value in matters concerning Joan's history? It is not really a chronicle but a journal, the author, or rather compiler, of which resided in Venice and collected as into a kind of newspaper every report false or true. He retails many things about Joan which are monstrously false. Upon the authority of his correspondents in Bruges (writing on the 14th July 1429) he relates that Joan had made a formal entry with the king into Rouen and Paris, and that a general peace had been declared and signed. A little further on he asserts that Joan of Arc had taken Auxerre (which she never entered), and had had all the inhabitants over seven years of age massacred, not even sparing the bishop and his clergy. Truly the discovery of this precious chronicle throws fresh light on the story of Joan of Arc! However, having warned the reader, I willingly transcribe the passages in which it is sought to find a vindication of Charles VII. (I have translated them from the Venetian text published by R. P. Ayroles, *La vraie Jeanne d'Arc*, vol. iii. p. 660):—

“As soon as the damsel (donzela) had fallen into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy, and it was rumoured that the English would buy her for money, the dauphin having been informed of it, sent an embassy (to the duke) to tell him that he should not

longer had, or indeed ever had had, need of her. The marvellous nature of her coming and of her victories had begun to weigh upon many ungrateful and many weak minds. Hearing her called a witch by the defeated enemy, many began to fear that there might indeed be some witchcraft mingled with her power, and so had an uneasy feeling that it would be prudent to extricate themselves from an alliance which had become open to suspicion. The populace, whose hearts she knew how to win, the crowd of simple folk, soldiers and peasants, would have remained faithful to her and might possibly have prevailed upon the nobles to make some attempt to rescue her; but their leaders had taken care to

on any account in the world consent (to deliver her up), and that if he did the king would have his revenge." Further on we read—"Through several letters arrived from Bruges the news has reached Venice that the virtuous damsel has been imprisoned near Rouen by the English, who have paid ten thousand crowns for her. Her imprisonment was very strict, and two or three times the English wished to have her burned as a heretic. But the Dauphin of France stopped them by great threats. Notwithstanding this, on the third occasion the English, assisted by certain of the French and blinded by their hatred, had her burned at Rouen. Before her martyrdom she appeared most contrite, resigned and well disposed. St Catherine the Virgin appeared to her saying, 'Daughter of God, be firm in the faith. Thou shalt be in glory in Paradise among the virgins.' She died filled with contrition. The Dauphin of France mourned her bitterly and planned to have a terrible revenge upon the English and the women of England."

It is for the reader to judge if this Venetian tale is sufficient to vindicate the memory of Charles VII. in the absence of all other evidence of any intervention whatever. It matters little to us "what was said" in Venice or elsewhere; we would like to know "what he did"; he did nothing.

delude them and had taught them ingratitude, not only by setting a personal example of it, but by daring, in order to justify themselves, to make an accomplice of the Almighty.

They loudly proclaimed that Joan had ceased to be the chosen instrument of God for the salvation of France, and that another would replace her in this character, who would be more acceptable in the sight of heaven, because he would guard himself more rigorously from pride. Regnault de Chartres, Archbishop of Rheims and Chancellor of France, wrote a letter to his flock, informing them of the capture of the Maid, and at the same time bidding them not to be too much afflicted. God was punishing her justly. "She would believe no one, but ever followed her own wishes." Besides, she had already been replaced. "A young herdsman from the Gévaudan mountains in the bishopric of Mende had come to the king, and said to him neither more nor less than Joan the Maid had said: that he was commanded by God to accompany the king's troops, and that the English and the Burgundians would without fail be discomfited. . . . God had permitted Joan the Maid to be captured because she was consumed with pride, because of the rich garments she had worn, and because she had not done what God had commanded her, but had followed her own inclinations."<sup>1</sup>

If those whom Joan had saved, on whose behalf

<sup>1</sup> This poor little shepherd did not survive Joan. Captured by the English in August 1431, between Beauvais and Gournay, he was, it is believed, thrown into the Seine.

she had fought, and for whom she was about to die, seem to have been unmoved at the news of her capture, her enemies on the contrary were filled with a fierce sensation of joy at hearing that she was in their power. As early as the 26th May (two days after the battle before Compiègne) the Vicar General of the Inquisition at Paris and the Paris University demanded that the prisoner should be handed over to the Church as a heretic or even an idolatress. On the 14th July, the University summoned John of Luxembourg to surrender his prisoner to the King "of France and of England." On the 21st November, the surrender having been made (in exchange for ready money, as will be seen further on), the University congratulated King Henry on having got possession of this dangerous enemy of the Christian faith, and asked that the Bishop of Beauvais should establish his court of justice in Paris where so many learned doctors would form an incomparable body of judges. On the same day they wrote an angry letter to Cauchon, blaming his delay. It is quite possible that Cauchon may have had this letter written to him by accomplices in Paris, but at all events the letter is genuine, and the responsibility of it remains with those who signed it.

All these documents are filled with such hatred of Joan of Arc that one wonders in reading them what personal injury the humble maiden could have done to these learned men. They were injured because she had baffled and set at naught their learning, and because, on the day when she attacked Paris, she

had made them tremble for fear lest they should lose their feudal rights, for they nearly all belonged to the English and Burgundian party. They despised her because they did not understand her, and they hated her because, while despising her, they also feared her. These were the sentiments current in Paris in what may be called the official world. For having presumed to take Joan's part, for having dared to say "that she was good and that what she did was right and according to God," an unfortunate Brittany peasant girl was seized, imprisoned, judged, condemned and burned just as Joan herself was nine months later.<sup>1</sup> Moreover the long duration of the war seems now to have awakened the native ferocity of the combatants. It was the period when the English, after formal judgment, buried alive Normandy women whose only crime had been to supply bread to "brigands," that is to say, to soldiers of the legitimate king.<sup>2</sup>

But the English, who had their own hatred to satisfy before troubling themselves about the grievances of the Paris University, and who, even before the relief of Orleans, had sworn that some day they would burn Joan of Arc, had no intention of allowing such a prize to escape them. On the other hand, it suited them admirably that she should receive her death sentence from an ecclesiastical court. By having her condemned as a witch they not only dishonoured her in the eyes of the people, but they

<sup>1</sup> *Journal du Bourgeois de Paris.*

<sup>2</sup> *Chronique du Mont-Saint-Michel*, published by Siméon Luce, vol. ii. p. 66.



also dishonoured Charles VII. who had made use of her. Moreover, it was no easy matter to dispose decently of Joan of Arc, a prisoner of war, without finding some pretext, such as an accusation of heresy. It was impossible to put her to death because she had defeated the English; that would have been contrary to the law of nations, by which they were only allowed, if they would accept no ransom for her, to keep her in prison (like the Duke of Orleans), until peace was restored. A degrading punishment would satisfy their hatred far better. It was therefore decided to involve her in a trial for heresy; but the English wished to be able to count upon the judges, that the result of the trial might be assured. This was not the case in Paris; in so large a town it was always possible that so powerful and famous a University might, in spite of its being under the English and Burgundian yoke, retain or recover sufficient independence to refuse a death sentence. Another and a less hazardous plan was immediately formed, and a man came forward at the opportune moment to furnish the means for carrying it out systematically, while disguising all signs of violence and hatred under a semblance of legality.

This man was Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, who, as we have seen, was driven from his episcopal town on the day when Beauvais surrendered to Charles VII. and Joan of Arc. Cauchon,<sup>1</sup> a creature

<sup>1</sup> Cauchon was not only the favourite of the Duke of Burgundy and the pliable and willing tool of the English, he was also the idol of the University of Paris, of whom he was one of the agents, adorned with the title of "Guardian of the Rights of the

of the Duke of Burgundy and the English, had sought refuge at Rouen, the episcopal throne of which was then vacant. He was led to believe that he might fall heir to it, but the Pope refused his consent, and Cauchon was afterwards forced to content himself with the bishopric of Lisieux, a meagre compensation for his dishonoured name.

As Joan of Arc had been captured at Compiègne, in the diocese of Beauvais, there was ground for maintaining that she came under the jurisdiction of Pierre Cauchon in a case concerning the faith. Cauchon claimed her; or rather, to save time, he started by buying her; the essential point was to hold her prisoner.

For the English had no claim to her. The legal position of Joan of Arc, prisoner of war, was this: she belonged to the bastard of Wandonne, who, with his own hand or by the hand of one of his archers, had captured her. The bastard's master, however, was John of Luxembourg, and therefore it was from him that she would have to be bought. Cauchon repaired in person to the camp outside Compiègne on the 14th July, and offered in the name of the King of England 6000 francs, besides 10,000 to John of Luxembourg, and an annuity of two or three

University." As early as 1419 the University recommended him to the Pope as one who might be allowed, as an exception to the rule, to hold a number of benefices, on the ground that "those who have given proof of courage and perseverance in labours, watches, sufferings and torments for the good of the Church, are also worthy of the greatest rewards." In 1420 the University warmly recommended him to the Chapter and people of Beauvais for the episcopal see of that town.

hundred francs to the bastard of Wandonne. In 1430, 10,000 francs was equivalent to about 84,000 francs at the present day, intrinsic value; but if we take into account the decrease in the purchasing value of precious metals (which is six or seven times lower in 1900 than it was in 1400), the sum for which Joan was sold to the English may be estimated at 550,000 francs.

The prisoner, who at first had been detained for a few days before Compiègne, was carried off to the Castle of Beaulieu near Noyon,<sup>1</sup> where she was imprisoned during June and July, and from thence to the Castle of Beaurevoir,<sup>2</sup> where she remained until November. Her imprisonment was humane at first; but her one idea was to escape and fly to the rescue of besieged Compiègne. At Beaulieu she nearly escaped by locking up her gaolers in the tower where she was imprisoned; she was, however, recaptured by the gate-keeper of the castle. After this John of Luxembourg sent her to Beaurevoir where she would be more strictly guarded. His wife and one of his aunts inhabited the castle and treated the prisoner with kindness. It is indeed a noticeable fact that no woman was ever lacking in respect or deference towards Joan of Arc, not even the Duchess of Bedford, who forbade her English guards to maltreat or insult her. The ladies at Beaurevoir offered her some women's clothes, for she was still wearing her military costume, but she refused them, saying, "The time has not yet come."

<sup>1</sup> Three leagues from Noyon, on the Amiens road.

<sup>2</sup> Near Le Catelet, on the road from Saint-Quentin to Cambrai.

A knight belonging to the English party, one Haimond de Macy, saw Joan at Beaurevoir, and his evidence is of interest. He confesses that he sought to ingratiate himself by accosting her in a somewhat disrespectful manner. She repulsed him in such a way that he did not dare make a second attempt. Like many others, he is struck by the extraordinary propriety and dignity of her speech and gesture. He saw her again at Rouen some time afterwards, and offered her his services in trying to get her ransomed and liberated, on condition that she never fought against the English again. "You have neither the desire nor the power," she replied, "to have me ransomed. I am perfectly aware that the English will kill me, hoping to conquer the kingdom of France after my death. But were there a hundred thousand 'Godons' more than there are at present, they would not get the kingdom." Upon hearing these words Stafford sprang towards her in a threatening attitude, as if he would like to kill her; but Warwick dragged him back.

At Beaurevoir, Joan was guilty of the one fault it has been possible to discover in her life of unsullied innocence; but it is right that we should thoroughly understand all the circumstances which go to excuse and explain the desperate act she committed, when she leaped from the tower in which she was imprisoned.<sup>1</sup> She knew Compiègne to be in dire straits and upon the point of falling; and in the gloom of her solitary prison she pictured the town which had

<sup>1</sup> The principal tower of a castle of this importance could not be less than fifty or sixty feet high.

been so loyal to its king destroyed and pillaged, and its inhabitants massacred. A yearning to go to their assistance beset her. Her voices forbade her to take the leap, and St Catherine assured her that Compiègne would be saved. She disobeyed the voices and threw herself over, commending herself to God. She remained motionless and unconscious on the spot where she had fallen, and was with great difficulty revived. No limbs were broken, but the fall brought on a violent fever. She recovered in the course of a few days, acknowledged her sin, and made confession of it with great humility. She always denied that she had wished for a single moment to kill herself, or had even allowed the idea of suicide to enter her mind. She wanted to go to the rescue of Compiègne, and had hoped, in spite of the voices (therein lay her sin, as she confessed), that God and the angels would support her as she fell. The voices forgave her, and assured her that God had pardoned her also, and that he had taken pity upon Compiègne. As a matter of fact, the siege of that brave town was raised on the 26th October. A few days later John of Luxembourg, having received the promised ransom, handed Joan over to the English, who took her to Rouen by slow degrees, passing through Arras, Drury, Le Crotoy, Saint-Valery, Eu and Dieppe on their way. She arrived in Rouen towards Christmas.

Being under the jurisdiction of the Church, she ought to have been confined in the prisons of the ecclesiastical courts. The English, however, thought otherwise. They preferred to obtain her death through a sentence passed by the Church;

but if the Church were to acquit her, they were fully resolved (and, as we shall see, they did not disguise the fact) to make her perish by some other means. To make quite sure that she should by no manner of means escape them, they detained her in their own prisons and placed her in the Castle of Rouen, under the guard of their own soldiers. Several judges protested against this, but Cauchon yielded to the express desire of the English, and became a party to the illegal act of judging in a clerical court an accused person confined in a lay prison. It was one of the iniquities of the trial; and the fact that in the prisons of the archbishopric of Rouen there was a special room set apart for women and attended to by women, makes it only the more scandalous.<sup>1</sup>

The prisoner was at first confined in an iron cage. At the trial no mention was made of this abominable deed, but disinterested witnesses affirmed it at the enquiry held with a view to her rehabilitation. She was chained by the neck, the hands and the feet. As soon as the English were convinced of the impossibility of her escaping from the castle, which was guarded by their own soldiers, their hatred cooled a little, or possibly they were afraid of killing her by excessive ill-treatment before the time was ripe for her martyrdom. They contented themselves after this with chaining her, and removed her from the cage, probably at the end of a fortnight or three weeks (at the beginning of the trial, according to

<sup>1</sup> *Recherches sur les prisons de Rouen*, by Robillard de Beaurepaire.

the evidence of Jean Massieu). She was still pretty strictly confined, and still sufficiently ill-treated to satisfy the most savage hatred.

Joan of Arc's prison was certainly exceedingly circumscribed. The only access to it was by a staircase of eight steps leading to the room in which she was confined. From a large block of wood solidly fixed to the wall there hung an iron chain, by which the prisoner was chained to her bed, and which was fastened by a padlock. A witness tells us that five Englishmen, low troopers of the class which in France was known as "housse-paillers" (that is, houspilleurs), watched the prisoner closely day and night, and amused themselves insulting her and loudly expressing their hopes that she would be condemned and put to death. In spite of the humane prohibition issued by the Duchess of Bedford, these outrages, according to the testimony of several witnesses, continued up to the very end.

The hatred of the English is but too easily explained by the impression prevalent among them that their reverses were due to the "spells" of the Maid. Three years later, Bedford, addressing himself in an official document<sup>1</sup> to his nephew the king, still attributed to this accursed enemy the decline of the good fortune the English had so long enjoyed upon the continent. "Everything prospered for you in France until the siege of Orleans. Then there fell, by the hand of God, it seems to me, a terrible blow. We committed the error of believing

<sup>1</sup> The English text is published by R. P. Ayroles, *La vraie Jeanne d'Arc*, vol. iii. p. 642.

in a disciple of Satan's, an imp of Hell, called Joan the Maid, and of fearing her. She employed criminal enchantments and sorceries; and it was owing to these practices that the number of your partisans diminished, the courage of those which remained to you disappeared, while the valour and number of your adversaries increased."

This official testimony written in cold blood and long after the event throws a striking light upon the sentiments which even the most enlightened Englishmen entertained for Joan of Arc. They did not deny her power, for they had felt the marvellous effects of it only too well. But since this power was working against them and putting an end to their luck, it soothed their pride to believe that only the devil was willing and able to injure England. They converted their enemy, who had long been too successful, into a witch. The wise and the sceptics, if there were any among them, could either reconcile themselves to this opinion, or make pretence of doing so. It served the schemes of all. The death of the "witch" would restore confidence to the English soldiers. Her condemnation compromised Charles VII. as an accomplice of this devil's emissary, and one whose ends had been served by her "spells," and introduced an element of discord, of trouble, or at least of anxiety into the minds of the French. At the sight of Joan of Arc's defeat and humiliation, these weak souls no longer knew how to regard even her victories. Every heart began to doubt whether, after all, there had not been some witchcraft, or, it may be, some mere chance or deception in what she



had done. And shortly afterwards, when her implacable enemies fell upon her, her friends, embarrassed and confused, took refuge in a cowardly silence, as if they were thinking to themselves: let God save her, if He sent her.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was probably this weak and ignoble sentiment which prevented Charles VII. from appealing to the Pope on the prisoner's behalf. Nothing would have been more natural when one of his subjects was being tried for heresy. The king did not dare because he was afraid of being called the accomplice and abettor of a witch.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE TRIAL—THE PUBLIC HEARING

JOAN was imprisoned in the Castle of Rouen. This did not give the Bishop of Beauvais any legal right to judge her in a diocese which was not his own. It was necessary by some legal fiction to delegate jurisdiction to him at Rouen so that he might seem to be sitting in his own diocese. Throughout the entire trial we are struck by the same observance of "forms" joined to a flagrant disregard of right and justice. The Episcopal See of Rouen being vacant, the chapter which exercised the powers of the Ordinary, did not hesitate to arrange this fiction, which was the first necessary act in the great trial which was about to begin (28th December 1430).

On the 3rd January 1431, King Henry<sup>1</sup> commanded that the proceedings should begin. He handed the matter over to the clergy, being careful to mention that if they acquitted Joan on questions concerning the faith, "it was his intention to take back and regain possession of the said Joan."<sup>2</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that he was only ten years old. His uncle Bedford, the Regent, governed in his name.

<sup>2</sup> The responsibility for this letter does not rest upon the child of ten who signed it, but upon his counsellors; it is a masterpiece of hypocrisy. King Henry sends Joan of Arc for trial, being re-

is difficult to deny that from this hour the death of the Maid had been determined upon by the English. If, however, the charge of heresy and witchcraft should be dismissed, it was not easy, as we have already pointed out, legally to condemn a prisoner of war for a crime of which every soldier belonging to Charles VII. was guilty. The English, therefore, at the risk of somewhat delaying their revenge, decided to begin by leaving the matter in the hands of the ecclesiastical tribunal; but at the same time they insinuated to the judges that they should be careful to abstain from any clemency towards Joan, for their clemency would be of no avail.

The proceedings against Joan of Arc were opened on the 9th January 1431. The bishop first summoned eight eminent personages, namely, the abbots of Fécamp and Jumièges, one of whom was a doctor of divinity, the other a doctor of canon law; the prior of Longueville, doctor of divinity; the treasurer of the Cathedral, a doctor of both laws; and four canons. He took counsel upon the course to pursue, chose as prosecutor an absolutely devoted and thoroughly trustworthy tool of his own, one Jean d'Estivet, canon of Beauvais, and appointed two recorders, chosen from among the priests of Rouen,

quired to do so by the Reverend Father in God, the Bishop of Beauvais, and exhorted thereto by "our very dear and well beloved daughter the University of Paris," purely from motives of zeal towards the Church and out of obedience to its orders. But still, "it is our intention to retake and regain possession of the said Joan in the event of her not being convicted and accused of the above mentioned offences," blasphemy, heresy, schism, etc.

and an usher. On the 13th January the Court<sup>1</sup> examined reports based upon enquiries which had been made about Joan at Domremy and elsewhere. It may easily be imagined in what a prejudiced manner these enquiries had been conducted. One witness, Nicolas Bailley, a notary, who was one of the informers, subsequently stated (at the case for rehabilitation) that, having brought from Domremy evidence favourable to Joan of Arc, he found himself treated at Rouen as a "false Armagnac." These reports, moreover, were neither submitted to the accused nor produced at the trial; which would lead one to suppose that after all they were entirely in her favour.

Did Cauchon's avowed partiality go so far as to falsify the official reports of the case published under his auspices? He has been stoutly accused of having done so, and therefore it is important for us in these pages to settle definitely so vital a point. Our whole knowledge of the trial certainly hangs upon these records. Are they veracious? We believe them to be so. It is true that at the rehabilitation trial a witness called Manchon, who had

<sup>1</sup> One hundred and thirteen judges in all appeared during the trial, but they never sat all at once. The number of judges present never exceeded sixty. This manner of forming judgment of a case without having followed all its phases had many drawbacks, but was, however, customary. Nicolas Midy, the most assiduous of the judges, sat thirty-seven times, but thirty-one of them only sat once. More than eighty of the hundred and thirty were functionaries of the University of Paris. See *Le Procès de Jeanne d'Arc et l'Université de Paris*, by le P. H. Denifle and Em. Chatelain, Paris, 1897, 8vo.

acted as clerk or recorder at the first trial, formally accused Cauchon of having tried to falsify the reports, and alleged upon this point that clerks who were confederates had been concealed<sup>1</sup> behind a curtain with orders to insert into the case fictitious answers ruinous to the accused. The official documents bear no evidence of such tampering; they are consistent with one another and are to all appearances correct. It is possible that Cauchon may have wished to reserve a complete report of the trial for his own use, and that this gave rise to those malicious rumours, for which it does not seem to us there is much foundation. The recorder Manchon declared, moreover, that he had refused to countenance such manœuvres and that he had banished the intruding clerks; he further certified that the official report signed by him was absolutely genuine, and contained nothing which was not true "according to the best of his knowledge and belief." In short, whatever may have been Cauchon's secret intentions, I do not consider that we have any reason for doubting the honesty of the official reports.<sup>2</sup> Besides, having found nothing in them which does not tend entirely to Joan of Arc's credit and loudly pro-

<sup>1</sup> At the trial for rehabilitation Pierre Miget, one of the judges, admitted the fact of the hidden reporters; but he failed to see the object of it, for, said he, the official reporters were honest. That is all that matters to us.

<sup>2</sup> The minutes of the case were originally written in French by the two notaries Manchon and Boisguillaume, and subsequently translated into Latin, long after the trial, by Manchon himself and Thomas de Courcelles. We possess a part only of the original report in French, but we have the whole of the Latin translation.

claim her innocence and virtue, I confess I cannot discover any positive evidence of the falsifications which have been somewhat vaguely imputed to her judges.

Joan appeared before them for the first time on Wednesday the 21st February in the chapel of the castle at 8 o'clock in the morning. Cauchon presided, and was assisted by forty-two judges, among whom were seven doctors and two bachelors of divinity, two doctors of canon or civil law, and thirteen licentiates. The Vicar of the Inquisition of France refused to attend, under the pretext that his authority extended only over Normandy, and that the case which was being actually judged at Rouen was being constructively judged at Beauvais. Thus did Cauchon's wily reasonings turn against himself. Before the case was finished, however, the Inquisitor consented to appear. Had he persisted in his refusal his absence would have rendered Joan's condemnation far more difficult.

Upon the eve of the first hearing Jean Massieu, a priest who was acting as usher, summoned the prisoner to appear. Joan replied that she was quite ready to do so and to speak the truth "concerning the faith." She requested the favour of being allowed to attend Mass before the hearing, but the court refused to accord her this indulgence because of the accusation of heresy which was hanging over her, and because of the "monstrous dress" (*difformitate habitus*) she persisted in wearing.

The way from the prison to the court-house led past the chapel. Joan begged to be allowed to stop a moment so as to kneel down before the chapel

door and pray. Jean Massieu consented, but when Cauchon<sup>1</sup> heard of it he blamed the usher severely, and forbade his ever doing such a thing again.

When Joan of Arc was brought before the judges the president requested her to speak the entire truth without trying to screen herself by evasions or cunning answers. Her reply is remarkable, and explains certain obscurities in the language she used later on in the trial.

"I do not know," she said, "upon what you wish to question me. It may be that you will ask me something that I cannot tell you. About my father and my mother, and about everything that I have done since my arrival in France, I swear to answer freely. But about the revelations I have had from God, I have never said or revealed anything except to King Charles only, and I will reveal nothing, though it cost me my head." She had, she said, been forbidden by her "counsel" to speak upon these things. She added that in the course of eight days she would be quite certain as to what she should be silent about and what she should reveal; her "voices" would have instructed her. But to any question concerning her faith she would answer willingly and speak the entire truth. Kneeling upon her knees, her two hands laid upon the Gospels, she swore to do this. She then proceeded to give the judges an account of her birth and early years. But she refused to recite the Lord's prayer to Cauchon, adding: "I will say it to you if you will hear me—but in confession." It was perhaps

<sup>2</sup> According to another witness it was d'Estivet, the prosecutor, who reviled Jean Massieu.

because Cauchon feared in this way to hear a confession which he would not afterwards be able to use against her, that he was cautious and refused to confess her. He ended by warning her not to make any attempt to escape. She replied, "I do not accept that warning. If I escape, let no one accuse me of having broken my word, for I have given it to no one." She complained of being in chains, and having irons on her feet. "It is to keep you more securely," said Cauchon, "for you have several times tried to escape." "It is true," she replied, "I have tried to escape; I would try again; it is the right of every prisoner to try and escape."

Even at this first examination we notice in the prisoner a heroic determination not to accuse anyone, not to throw upon anyone else the responsibility for the things which might justly or unjustly be imputed to her. It is true that such a course was consistent with the declaration she had made of having always acted in obedience to the heavenly voices which guided her; but we should none the less admire the courageous resolution she made and kept until the day of her death, never to let fall a single word of recrimination against the traitors and ingrates who, by abandoning or deliberately opposing her, had at last brought her where she was. She did not even mention La Trémoille or Regnault de Chartres, and she mentioned only to bless the king who had deserted her.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Joan appeared without an advocate. As a general rule, in cases before the Inquisition, the accused person had no advocate, though in the case of a minor he had at least a curator. Accord-



The second hearing<sup>1</sup> took place upon the following morning (Thursday the 22nd), not in the chapel this time, but in a room adjoining the great hall of the castle. The number of judges had increased to fifty, fifteen of whom were doctors of divinity, five doctors of civil and canon law, and one a doctor of medicine. It was quite a university which assembled to condemn the unhappy Joan. "You overwhelm me," she said (*nimum oneratis me*). Jean Beaupère, professor of divinity and former head of the Paris University, conducted the examination with much skill. The matter was a grave and delicate one; she was requested to give an explanation of her voices. She would not lie, yet she would not tell them all. She briefly described her first visions: "The voice was good, the voice came from God; it has protected me well, and I understood it. It bid me lead a good life and be regular at church. It told me that I must go to France; that I could no longer remain where I was; that I must go to France to raise the siege of Orleans. It repeated this to me two or three times a week. It told me to go and find Robert de Baudricourt, Governor of Vaucouleurs, and

ing to Massieu, the usher, who must have been well informed, Joan asked for a "counsel" *ad respondendum, quod diceret se esse simplicem*. The counsel was refused, and Cauchon said to her: "You will answer for yourself." Later, when the examinations were finished, he offered to appoint a counsel for her, and it was then she who refused, saying: "The counsel of my Lord is sufficient for me," meaning the counsel of God.

<sup>1</sup> According to the statement of one of the witnesses, Guillaume Manchon, the first sitting had been exceedingly stormy. The sittings lasted as a rule from eight in the morning until eleven.

that he would give me an escort. I replied: 'I am a poor girl and do not know how to ride or to fight.'" She then told them of her adventures, of the long delay and the discouragements patiently endured. "At last Robert de Baudricourt gave his consent and allowed me to start, saying, 'Go, then, whatever may betide.' The voice had told me that it would all happen thus."

She described her journey, her arrival at Chinon, her first interview with the king whom she recognised, or rather divined, her voices pointing him out to her. But what her judges especially wished to know was what she had said privately to the king, and what secret she had revealed to gain his confidence. On this point they were never able to extract any statement from her. Anything which even touched upon her relations with Charles VII. remained shrouded in mystery in the answers she made to their repeated questions. "When the voice pointed out your king to you, was there any light in the room?" "Pass on to something else."<sup>1</sup> "Did you see an angel hovering over your king?" "Spare me. Pass on to something else." She declared, however, that before the king employed her in the work she had seen many apparitions and had had many wonderful revelations. "What apparitions? What revelations?" asked the judge. "I will not tell you what they were. Send to the king, he will tell you. . . . Not a day passes that I do not hear this voice. I have never asked of it any other reward than the salvation of my soul. The voice bade me remain at

<sup>1</sup> *Passez outre.*

St Denis, in France, and I would fain have stayed there, but the leaders dragged me away against my will. If I had not been wounded I should have stopped there, but I was wounded in the trenches near Paris." She owned to having directed the attack upon Paris. "It was a Saint's day," said the judge. "I believe so." "Was it right to fight upon a Saint's day?" "Pass on to something else."

Two days later (the 24th February) there was a third hearing at which sixty judges were present. When Joan was requested for the third time to swear that she would speak the entire truth without reservation or condition, she replied: "Grant me permission to speak. By my faith, you might ask me such questions that I should not be able to speak the truth, for instance, concerning the revelations; for perchance you might force me to tell what I have sworn not to tell, and thus I should be perjured, which you ought not to desire. I tell you to weigh well your words when you say that you are my judge. You are taking upon yourself a heavy responsibility and you overwhelm me. I have twice taken my oath, that is sufficient." This painful scene lasted a long time. They finally extracted this oath from her: "I swear to speak the truth about those things which I know and which touch the case."

Jean Beaupère conducted the examination. "When did you last eat and drink?" "Yesterday afternoon." "When did you hear your voices?" "Yesterday and to-day." "At what time yesterday?" "Three times: in the morning, at the hour of vespers, and in

the evening at the *Ave Maria*. There are many days when I hear them more frequently." "What were you doing yesterday morning when the voice came to you?" "I was sleeping, the voice awoke me." "The voice awoke you by touching you on the arm?" "The voice awoke me without touching me." "Was the voice in the room?" "I do not know, but it was in the castle." "Did you give thanks to the voice on bended knee?" "I thanked it sitting in my bed with clasped hands, after having prayed for help. The voice bade me answer without fear, for God would help me."

At this point Joan broke off, and, turning towards Cauchon, said to him: "You call yourself my judge; beware of what you do, for truly I am sent by God, and you are putting yourself in great danger!"

The examination was then resumed. "Did the voice forbid you to divulge everything?" "That is a question I will not answer. I have revelations concerning the king which I will not tell you. . . . I am more afraid of erring by saying something which might displease those voices than I am afraid of answering you." "Do you think it is displeasing to God to tell the truth?" "The voices bade me say certain things to the king, but not to you. This very night, they told me many things for the king's benefit. I would that he knew them, were I to taste no more wine until Easter. But if the king knew these things would he dine more cheerfully?" "Joan, are you in a state of grace?" "If I am not, may God put me in one; if I am, may God keep me there. I should be the most unhappy woman in the

world if I knew myself not to be in a state of grace. But if I were in mortal sin, the voice would not come to me." The question was so palpably unfair that one of the judges was bold enough to say—"She is not bound to answer." "Hold your tongue," shouted Cauchon furiously!<sup>1</sup>

They tormented her with questions concerning the "Fairy Tree," where, as a little girl, she used sometimes to go and dance with other children of her own age. They would fain have made this childish act a pretext for accusing her of idolatry or at least of pagan superstitions. They were, however, unable to manage this. They then fell back upon her masculine attire, that cause of offence which was to survive all the others and was finally to ruin her. "Joan, would you like a woman's dress?" "Give me one; I will gladly take it, if I may go away from here; if not, I will not take it. I am content with this, since it pleases God that I should wear it."

The fourth hearing was on Tuesday the 27th February. Jean Beupère cross-questioned the prisoner, and either from curiosity or from a desire to elicit some imprudent answer which might give a foundation for the accusation of heresy, he greatly increased the questions about the apparitions. He first affected a tone of easy good nature. "Joan, how have you been since Saturday?" "You can see for yourself, as well as possible." "Do you fast every day this Lent?" "Does that bear upon the

<sup>1</sup> Had she said yes, she would have been accused of pride; had she said no, it would have been equivalent to acknowledge the crimes imputed to her.

case?" "Yes, certainly." "Well then, I have fasted diligently this Lent." "Have you heard the voice since Saturday?" "Yes indeed, many times." "On Saturday, in this hall where you are being examined, did you hear the voice?" "I heard it!" "What did it say to you?" "I did not quite understand it until I had returned to my room." "What did it say to you then?" "To answer fearlessly. I asked counsel about the questions which are put to me. I will gladly tell you what God has permitted me to reveal; but as to the revelations which concern the King of France, I will say nothing without permission from the voice." "Was it the voice of an angel which spoke to you, or of a saint, or the voice of God Himself, without any intermediary?" "It was the voice of St Catherine and St Margaret. Their brows are crowned with beautiful crowns, most rich and precious. God allows me to say that much. If you doubt my words, send to Poitiers where I was examined before." "But how do you know they are those two saints? How do you distinguish them?" "I know it is they, and I distinguish them." "But how?" "By the way they greet me. It is fully seven<sup>1</sup> years since they undertook to direct me. I know them because they have told me who they are." "Are they dressed alike?" "I will say no more on the subject; I have no permission to. If you do not believe me, go to Poitiers." "What apparition did you see first?" "Saint Michael. He was not alone, but surrounded

<sup>1</sup> Six years, in point of fact; the first vision was in the summer of 1425.

by many angels." "You saw them bodily and actually?" "I saw them with my bodily eyes, as well as I see you, and when they vanished I wept and would fain that they had taken me with them." "What did St Michael look like?" "I must not say."

They then proceeded to question her about the sword of St Catherine de Fierbois. They wished to prove that the sword was enchanted, but the candour and simplicity of Joan's answers dispelled such a suspicion. "The voices told me that the sword was buried in the earth, covered with rust and marked with five crosses." "What benediction did you pronounce or cause to be pronounced upon the sword?" "I did not pronounce any nor cause any to be pronounced. I should not have known how to bless it. I was very fond of it because it had been found in the Church of St Catherine, of whom I was very fond." "Did you not sometimes lay it upon the altar to bring you luck?" "Not that I am aware of." "Did you have it when you were captured?" "No, I had a sword which had been taken from a Burgundian; the other I had at Lagny,<sup>1</sup> but after Lagny I wore the Burgundian's sword, because it was a good fighting sword, useful for dealing heavy thumps and blows" (*de bonnes buffes et de bons torchons*).<sup>2</sup> "Where did you leave the other sword?" "That has no bearing upon the

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 74, *n.*; according to the testimony of the Duke of Alençon, it was at St Denis that she broke St Catherine's sword.

<sup>2</sup> In French in the text of the original report of the trial.

case." "When you arrived at Orleans had you a standard, and of what colour was it?" "A standard, the ground of which was covered with fleur-de-lis; the world was depicted upon it, and on the sides two angels. It was of white linen or a kind of fustian<sup>1</sup> and fringed with silk. The names of Jesus and of Mary were inscribed upon it." "Which do you love most, the sword or the standard?" "I love the standard many times, forty times, more than the sword." "Who ordered the painting to be made upon the standard?" "I have told you often enough that I did nothing except by the command of God. I bore the standard when I attacked the enemy, so as to avoid slaying anyone, and I have never slain a man."

The fifth hearing opened on the 1st March. It was upon this occasion that Joan uttered the following remarkable words, authentically recorded in the official report of the trial:—"Before seven years are over, the English will have paid a greater forfeit than they did at Orleans.<sup>2</sup> They will lose everything in France through a great victory which God will send the French. This I know because of a revelation which has been made to me; I know it as surely as I know that you are before me at this moment." "When will this come to pass?" "I know neither the day nor the hour."

They returned to the apparitions, which in the eyes of the judges were the most vital point of the

<sup>1</sup> *Boncassin*.

<sup>2</sup> *Dimittent majus vadium*. Charles VII. made his formal entrance into Paris on the 12th November 1437.



case. "How do you know that what appears to you is a man or a woman?" "I know them by the voice." "What do you see appearing?" "The face." "Have the female saints hair?" "What a question! Yes." "Is there anything between their hair and their crowns?" "No." "Is their hair long and flowing?" "I do not know." "Have they arms or other limbs?" "I do not know, but they speak plainly and in beautiful language and I understood them perfectly." "How did they speak if they have no bodies?" "I leave that to God. Their voices are beautiful, soft and kind; they speak in French." "Does not St Margaret speak English?" "How should she speak English since she is not on the side of the English!" "Do they wear earrings?" "I do not know at all." "What promises did they make to you?" "That my king should be reinstated in his kingdom (whether his enemies wish it or not); they also promised to lead me to Paradise, as I asked them to." "How did St Michael look when he appeared to you?" "I did not see that he wore a crown." "What garments?" "I do not know?" "Was he naked?" "Think you that God has not the wherewithal to clothe him?" "Had he hair?" "Why should his hair have been cut? But I have not seen him since I was at the Castle of Crotoy.<sup>1</sup> I do not see him very often."

They made a point of trying to confuse her by the number, irrelevancy and incoherence of their questions. At times the judges questioned her all

<sup>1</sup> Where she lodged when they brought her from Beaurevoir to Rouen.

together, intermingling their queries without waiting for an answer. Upon several occasions she was obliged to say to them, "Good, my lords, speak one at a time." At the sixth hearing, on the 3rd March, she was questioned upon every conceivable matter. They adjured her to put aside her masculine attire. "The time has not yet come," she said.

They asked her whether she had not said that escutcheons made in the likeness of her own were lucky?

"No; I said to our men, 'Force your way fearlessly among the English.' And I went myself."

They asked her about Friar Richard, the Franciscan preacher who had attached himself to her since the entry into Troyes. She laughingly reminded them of the episode which has been mentioned above; how "the people of Troyes, doubting whether I came from God, sent the Friar out to meet me; he approached, making the sign of the cross and sprinkling holy water. 'Approach fearlessly,' I said to him, 'I shall not fly away.'"

This is an instance of the good humour and arch simplicity which she constantly exhibited throughout her life and even during the miseries of her trial. Joan of Arc belongs to a race and a country wherein naïveté is not incompatible with a certain shrewdness and a touch of irony. She was born twelve miles at the most from the Castle of Joinville (whose worthy lord had, of old, so well exemplified the wit of the province of Champagne), and Jacques d'Arc, her father, had come to Domremy from the very heart of Champagne. But that this uneducated and

ignorant peasant girl of nineteen, depressed by her chains and her forsaken condition, should have been able to retain this alertness of mind, standing alone before fifty solemn, scowling, hostile doctors, seems scarcely less astounding than her victories. During the trial she astonished everyone and frequently embarrassed her enemies by the aptness, decision and clearness of her answers.

Besides her good sense and her quickness at grasping a point we cannot but admire her extraordinary memory. In that maze of unconnected and incoherent questions, she never once contradicted herself. "I said so and so," she replied one day; and when Boissiguillaume, one of the clerks of the court, contradicted her, she insisted, saying, "Look among your papers!" He made a careful search and found her statement. She was delighted and said to the clerk, "Do not make any more mistakes like that, or I will pull your ears." I have taken this outburst from the evidence of Pierre Daron, deputy of the bailiff of Rouen, but I would not like to vouch for the exact wording, so different is it from her ordinary manner, which oftentimes was familiar and sometimes mocking, but never out of place.

Her judges pretended to believe that she had wished to make people worship her. "Did you order any image made in your likeness? Have you ever seen such a one?" I saw at Arras a picture painted by a Scotchman, in which I was represented clad in armour, kneeling upon one knee before the king, to whom I was handing a letter. I

have never seen any other portrait of myself, nor have I ever had one made." "Did not your followers have services and masses celebrated and prayers said in your honour?" "I do not know. If they did, it was not at my request. If they prayed for me, I see no harm in it." "They believe you to have been sent by God?" "I do not know whether they believe it, but whether they believe it or not, I am sent by God!" "In what spirit did they kiss your feet, your hands and your garments?" "Many folk had pleasure in seeing me; if they kissed my hands, it was no oftener than I could help. The poor came gladly to me because I did not trouble them but loved to succour them." They tried to represent in a suspicious light her interview with Catherine de la Rochelle, the adventuress who pretended to have seen apparitions. "What did you say to her?" "I told her to return to her husband's home, to mind the house and feed the children. My saints had warned me that she was a mad woman."

They tormented her unmercifully about the only fault she had ever committed, namely, the leap at Beaurevoir, for which there were extenuating circumstances. "I had been in that prison four months. I was told that the English were approaching. My voices forbade me to leap, but I was afraid of the English; commending myself to God and to our Lady, I took the leap; I was wounded, but Saint Catherine comforted me and told me I should recover!" "Did you not, upon seeing yourself recaptured, give way to rage? Did you not blaspheme?" "Never! and it is not my habit to swear."

After the sixth hearing Cauchon stopped the examination, announcing that it would be resumed later before a smaller number of judges deputed for the purpose, and that it would then deal with all the points it might be deemed advisable to elucidate. The reason for this step was evident. Cauchon was afraid that Joan was defending herself too well, and that far from intimidating or disconcerting her, the solemnity of the scene and the great concourse of learned men seemed to inspire her with courage and presence of mind. Her youth, her helplessness and her loneliness had moved some of her judges to pity, and this pity might become contagious. Had not Guillaume Duval and Isambeau de la Pierre<sup>1</sup> been discovered making signals to the Maid to show her what it would be to her advantage to answer? Warwick had seen them and had shouted furiously to the monk: "Why should you help this wretch by making all those signs to her? Zounds! villain, if I see you any more trying to free her and warn her of her interest, I will have you thrown into the Seine." Guillaume Duval fled in terror to his monastery.

Before a few carefully chosen judges it would be possible without too much transgression of the law to arrange matters so as to bring them to the desired issue. And when the prosecution should have been skilfully brought to a close, it would always be easy among these weak men, who were either cowed, prejudiced or bribed, to secure a large majority in favour of condemnation. The business,

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Martin Ladvenu.

however, had to be prepared by a select committee. Six days were spent in drawing up a kind of summary of the case in order to decide wherein it was still incomplete and what were the points to be cleared up before the less numerous tribunal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is these delegates entrusted to continue the trial in the prison, who, with their master, Cauchon, and Jean d'Estivet (Cauchon's right hand), should bear the principal responsibility for the iniquitous crime which was committed in condemning Joan of Arc. Their names were Jean Beaupère, Jacques de Touraine, Nicolas Midy, Pierre Maurice, Thomas de Courcelles, and Nicolas Loiseleur. The three first were subsequently sent to Paris to ensure the official support of the University to the condemnation. Beaupère, Midy and Maurice were canons of Rouen ; Loiseleur, a canon of Chartres ; Courcelles, a doctor of Sorbonne, and Jacques de Touraine, a Minorite friar.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE TRIAL (*continued*)—IN THE PRISON

ON the morning of the 10th March, Cauchon and five assistants repaired to the Castle to interrogate Joan of Arc in the little room which served her as a prison. They pressed her with questions "concerning the sign she had shown the king in order that he should believe in her mission." At first she refused to answer, but, provoked beyond endurance, she ended by saying: "An angel sent by God gave the sign to the king." By degrees, being more and more severely pressed, she allowed herself, both at this examination and on the following days, to be enticed further in this dangerous direction. Doggedly resolved (to her honour be it said) never to give away the king's secret, she wished at any cost to escape from the importunity of her judges, and, considering herself justified in presenting an actual fact under an allegorical form, she finally described to them her interview with the king by painting in the most wonderful colours a scene which had in reality been far more simple. "The sign was, that the angel, tendering the king a crown, certified to him that with the help of God and the efforts of Joan the whole of the kingdom of France would be his. The crown which the angel brought

was of fine gold; it was given to the Archbishop of Rheims, and is still in the king's treasury. The angel who brought it entered with it by the door and was never separated from it." This was an allegorical account of the interview at Chinon and the coronation at Rheims. The angel was Joan herself, sent by God to win back for the king the crown of France, eventually placed upon the head of Charles VII. by the Archbishop at Rheims. She invented this setting as a means of escape from an importunate question, and to put her judges off the scent by feeding their curiosity with these imaginary details. No perversion of the truth (however excusable and innocent) fell readily from her candid and fearless lips. She played the part badly and contradicted herself several times, with the result that her judges soon became aware that she had trifled with them, and that they regarded in their hearts as a ground of mortal offence.

The Vicar of the Inquisition of France joined the judges upon the 12th March. Until that date he had held aloof under the pretext that his authority, restricted to the diocese of Rouen, did not extend to that of Beauvais, in which, by a fiction, the trial was being carried on. His scruples having been removed by a warrant from the Inquisitor General, he thenceforth attended the examinations; but, according to the testimony of Manchon, the clerk, he took no keen interest in the matter and always took a secondary part in a trial which he really should have conducted. The attitude of the Inquisition during the trial of Joan of Arc is somewhat obscure



to us. On the whole it seems to have been rather favourable to the accused. When Cauchon and Warwick threatened with death the three judges who had urged Joan to submit to the Church in order to save her life,<sup>1</sup> the Inquisitor evinced a desire to withdraw, but his benevolence or his courage did not go to the length of saving the girl whom those in power wished to destroy.

Among much repetition, the sole object of which seems to have been to exhaust the wretched girl, the examinations conducted in the prison comprised several remarkable answers, in which her beautiful soul further revealed itself. "Did you not consider it a sin to leave your father and mother without their permission?" "They have forgiven me. I obeyed them in everything except in leaving them. God commanded it; had I a hundred fathers and a hundred mothers, had I been a king's daughter, I should have gone."

On the 13th March she informed them that her voices had just said to her: "Take all in good part. Have no fear of your martyrdom. You will enter at last into the Kingdom of Heaven." "Do you then consider that your salvation is assured?" "I believe implicitly what my voices tell me." "Do you then believe that it is impossible for you to commit a deadly sin?" "I know nothing about it, I leave everything in God's hands." "In that case you have no need of confession?" "It would be impossible to purify one's conscience too much."

<sup>1</sup> Jean de la Fontaine, Isambard de la Pierre, and Martin Ladvenu.

"When you took that leap at Beaurevoir, do you consider that you did not sin?" "I believe that I sinned, but I confessed and have been pardoned; all the same, I never wished to kill myself?" "Was it not a deadly sin?" "I do not know; I leave it to God." "How do you know that it is not Satan who comes to you in the guise of an angel?" "Because the angel said to me: 'Be a good girl, God will aid thee. Thou wilt go to the assistance of the King of France.' And the angel told me of the sorry plight of the kingdom of France." "Then do St Catherine and St Margaret hate the English?" "They love what God loves, and hate what He hates." "Does God hate the English?" "Of the love or the hatred which God bears the English I know nothing; but full well I know that they shall all be put out of France except those who shall die there." "When you went into battle was it you who were of assistance to your standard or was your standard of assistance to you?" "Whether it was the standard who conquered or whether it was I who conquered it was all one to Our Lord." "But was the hope of victory founded upon you or upon the standard?" "It was founded upon Our Lord and not elsewhere." "If some other person had carried it, would it have been so lucky?" "I do not know. I leave it to God." "If you were to lose your virginity, would your voices come to you?" "That has not been revealed to me." "If you were married would they still come?" "I do not know. I leave that to God." "Why was your standard carried to the coronation instead of those of the other leaders?" "As it had

shared in the toil, it was just that it should share in the glory." An answer sublime in its simplicity. Mark, however, the insidious treachery of every question: each one was a dilemma in itself, and whichever of the two alternatives she chose, it was possible to turn her answer against her. It is extraordinary how she defeated these quibbles by sheer force of candour, frankness and common sense.

At the case for rehabilitation all the witnesses agreed in denouncing the injustice of the examinations to which the accused had been submitted. The questions were difficult, obscure and subtle, and were presented in a deceptive and embarrassing form. According to Frère Isambard, "the greatest scholars and the most learned folk would have had great difficulty in answering; and many of the spectators complained of them." Joan complained too sometimes, but generally found some way of making a good answer, "thanks to her simplicity," we say; "thanks to her devilish guile," said her enemies, who were themselves greatly surprised and enraged by the aptness of all her answers. "Ah! she was a mighty cunning woman," declared one of her judges, Jean de Beaupère, at the rehabilitation enquiry. So bitter was his hatred against her, that twenty-five years after her death he was as fully convinced as ever of her crimes and seems to have invariably congratulated himself upon having done a most pious act in burning such a witch.

They succeeded better in compromising her by asking her questions which she was incapable of understanding. On the 17th March, they said to

her: "Do you refer all your actions to the decision of the Church?" "I refer them to God who sent me, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to all the saints of Paradise. It seems to me the same thing—God or the Church." Their answer to this was to explain to her the distinction between the Church *triumphant*, composed of the saints and the elect, and the Church *militant*, whose jurisdiction they were inviting her to recognise. These long words, however, were unfamiliar to her. It was the first time she had heard them, and they conveyed nothing to her; failing to understand them, she made an ambiguous answer which was afterwards used against her. This sixth examination, which took place in the prison on the 17th March, was the last; no doubt Cauchon and his assistant judges had found it not unproductive of result. The following day, the 18th March, was Passion Sunday.

On Palm Sunday, the 25th March, they offered to allow her to attend Mass and receive the paschal sacrament, on condition that she wore woman's clothes. This, although protesting her ardent desire to hear Mass and partake of the body of her Lord, she refused to do. "For," she said, "it is not yet possible for me to put on woman's clothing." Her obstinacy upon this point surprised her judges, shocked most of them exceedingly, and was probably understood only by a very few. Posterity at all events should not misunderstand the motives for such obduracy. Thrown without defence upon the mercy of rough men who were her bitter enemies, this unhappy girl of nineteen was a prey

to mortal terror, fearing what was worse than death itself. It seemed to her that while she wore this soldier's dress her virtue was exposed to less risk; that a woman dressed like a man is scarcely a woman at all in men's eyes, and may reasonably expect to prove repugnant to them.<sup>1</sup>

The next few days were employed in making a preliminary summing-up of the case. All her "crimes" were first collected, without much regard for order, under seventy heads. Three-quarters of the accusations were founded upon falsehoods or distorted facts which Joan, referring to the answers she had given during the trial, contemptuously denied; and the remainder upon false and malicious interpretation. Let us quote some examples. By an insidious process (of which there had already been too many instances during the examination) they placed her in this dilemma: "Either she lies when she asserts that her revelations came from God, or, if she really believes that they did so, why did she disobey them upon two separate occasions (before Paris and at Beaurevoir)? She pleads that she could not restrain herself from leaping, although God had forbidden her to do so. Does she then deny free will? Does she fall into the error of those who say that the will of men can be forced?" Such were the sophistries which were employed to ruin this ignorant girl delivered defenceless into the hands of learned men!

<sup>1</sup> The evidence of Pierre Cusquel, a mason, who questioned her upon this point, throws the clearest light upon what Joan of Arc thought.

There are two points which must be dwelt upon ; the rest would be mere repetition. One of them, the only point in the line of defence adopted by her which we cannot conscientiously approve of, is this. In order to guard the king's secret more securely, she persisted in the purely fanciful account of her arrival at Chinon, adding from time to time new and equally imaginary details. No doubt she spoke allegorically, but why did she do so, when upon every other occasion she simply spoke the truth ? Why did she say, "I did not leave the angel, I entered with him, I walked with him," when she only really meant that there was no other angel but herself ; an angel indeed, since she was a "messenger" of God ? The explanation is that by this subterfuge she tried to conceal from everyone the "sign" which she gave to the King of France, and which confirmed her mission. This sign is known or at least suspected by history, but Joan died without having divulged it.

The other point is a more serious one. She was accused of having persistently refused to submit herself to the Church Militant, and of having expressed a right of appealing from it directly to God. This accusation is untrue, although some of Joan of Arc's most enthusiastic admirers seem to have accepted it as well founded and honoured the heroine for it. Her memory, however, cries out loudly against such praise.

The truth of the matter we believe to have been this. When Joan was asked "whether she submitted herself to the Church Militant," she did

not understand the expression, which was too learned for her ignorance. She believed that they were asking her to recognise in her actual judges, that is to say her persecutors, the right of condemning her to a just death. She courageously refused to do this, and appealed to God. She said to Cauchon's face: "I will not say that I submit to your judgment, because you are my worst enemy." But when the terms employed were afterwards more clearly explained to her, when she was told that the Church Militant meant the Pope and all the bishops and priests, she emphatically declared herself willing to submit and appeal to its authority; and that, if she had previously said anything against the Christian faith, far from supporting such words, she meekly withdrew them, asking that she "might be instructed." Ten times was this assurance of submission repeated, yet every time the judges tried to misconstrue its absolute sincerity by citing something from among her earlier answers in such a manner as to throw suspicion upon her later ones. With great skill they endeavoured to draw from her concessions which she could not make without condemning herself. They were always trying to involve her in some hateful dilemma. They induced her to say "that she submitted herself fully, but that she was unable to revoke the truth of the visions and apparitions which she had had, and which God had sent her." "But if the Church Militant called upon her to revoke them?" "She could not do so." (Examination of the 31st March.) "Do you submit yourself, yes or no, to the Pope, the cardinals,

the archbishops and the bishops?" "Yes, but *our Lord comes first.*" There is certainly an accent of proud independence in this reply, but it is not such as to enable either friend or foe to say that the answer puts her beyond the pale of the Church. In the course of this same examination she said: "If unwittingly I have done or said anything which the clergy declare to be contrary to the Christian faith I do not wish to maintain it, I disown it." On the 17th March, when they asked her "Do you submit yourself to the Pope?" she replied: "Take me to him; before him I will say everything which it is my duty to say."

Isambard de la Pierre, a Dominican, who was one of the judges (and with Martin Ladvenu subsequently ministered to Joan at the stake), stated at the rehabilitation trial that he had exhorted her to submit herself to the Pope, and that she had said she did so willingly. He then exhorted her to submit to the Council of Basle. She asked what that was. Upon being informed that it consisted of people of her own party as well as people of the English party she said, "I submit myself to it." Whereupon Cauchon in a fury shouted to Isambard: "Hold your tongue, devil take you!" and forbade him to mention the answer. The English threatened to throw Isambard into the Seine. Joan complained to Cauchon, "You have everything which is against me written down, but you refuse to write anything which is in my favour."

This stage of the case will always be more or less shrouded in mystery. Apparently the judges, while



pretending to extract a submission pure and simple, were afraid of obtaining one, and possibly schemed to prevent it. At the rehabilitation trial Manchon and Boisguillaume, the two notary clerks, asserted independently of each other that Loiseleur, one of the judges, and d'Estivet, the prosecutor, used to steal into the prison with Cauchon at night, and pretending to be on Joan's side, advise her not to submit to the Church, hinting that such submission would prove her ruin and would lead to her condemnation. Others have stated<sup>1</sup> that Loiseleur, disguising his person and capacity, had himself presented to her as a Frenchman belonging to Charles the VII.'s party, detained in the castle as a prisoner, and that, under the guise of a friend and a companion in adversity, he gave her the same treacherous advice. Guilaume Manchon went so far as to assert that Loiseleur confessed her and subsequently betrayed the secrets of her confession, using them against her. No proof of this, however, can be found in any authentic document. And, finally, one witness, Pierre Cusquel,<sup>2</sup> testified from his own knowledge that Loiseleur, hiding himself behind the prison door, and disguising his voice, pretended to speak to the prisoner in the name of St Catherine. We do not like to believe that Joan could have allowed herself to be deceived by any of these more or less clumsy tricks; and without entirely denying that there may be a certain amount

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Jean Massieu, priest in Rouen, and usher at the trial.

<sup>2</sup> A common mason, perhaps a little credulous.

of truth in these stories (though they do not hang together very well), we think that their importance has been greatly exaggerated. Joan's resistance was founded upon exceedingly noble and entirely personal scruples. She was quite willing to submit, but not to surrender her claim to sincerity. That was all which remained to her in this abyss of misery.

The day after Easter (the 2nd April) they began to sum up in twelve articles the immense mass of charges and accusations confusedly extracted from the case. The first work had extended over seventy paragraphs, an interminable tissue of lies and cooked up stories confuted both by Joan herself and by all the evidence. The twelve articles were drawn up more cleverly, and presented a far more formidable charge. They were comparatively moderate in tone and contained few violent re-criminations. The facts, cleverly grouped together, are supposed to speak for themselves, and it is managed with considerable skill that they should do so without too noticeable a perversion of the truth.

Twenty-two judges, doctors and licentiates, took part in this work, the result of which was to pronounce Joan's "visions, voices, revelations and apparitions" to be "false and diabolical," and Joan herself scandalous, schismatic and under suspicion of heresy for having obstinately believed in them without asking anyone's advice.

The twenty-two judges then proceeded to discuss her punishment. The majority of them condemned Joan of Arc, in the event of her not retracting, to be handed over to the civil power; and if she did

retract, to imprisonment for life as a punishment for her sins. Three of them refrained from expressing an opinion, and two wished to refer the matter, one to Paris and the other to Rome. This latter, one Raoul Sauvage, a bachelor of divinity, was the only one of her judges who had the discernment, compassion or courage to declare the true motive for her persistency in keeping to her masculine attire.<sup>1</sup>

On Wednesday the 18th April, Joan, worn out by the ill treatment and chains, the threats, the weariness, the anguish of this interminable trial, lay ill and prostrate in her prison, where eight of the judges, one of whom was Cauchon, came to find her, in order to accomplish the formality of the "charitable exhortation." Before proceeding further they warned the accused that if she persisted "in her opinions" she would perish, but that if she renounced them she would be treated with leniency. They did not inform her that their "leniency" would spare nothing except the punishment of death. On that day Joan believed that her end was drawing near. She replied by thanking the judges for what they had been telling her for her good; but she added: "It seems to me that I am in great peril of death, seeing the sickness which is upon me. If such be the case, may God dispose of me as He thinks best. I look to you for confession, the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and burial in consecrated ground."

<sup>1</sup> He condemned her on this point, adding: "*Nisi hoc faceret ad præservationem violentiæ inferendæ propter virginitatem servandam.*"

These words failed to touch the judges. They pressed her to yield, urging that otherwise all that could be accorded to her would be the Sacrament of Penance. "Should my body die in prison," she answered, "I hope that you will have me buried in consecrated ground; should you not do so, I commit myself to God." "Once for all, will you or will you not submit yourself and your actions to the Church Militant?" "No matter what may be the consequences to myself I will do or say nothing which I have not already said during the trial." They quoted scripture to her, and threatened to abandon her "as a saracen." She answered: "I am a good Christian, properly baptized, and as a good Christian I will die." They then said to her: "Would you like a splendid and imposing procession ordered to restore you to better health?" "Surely," she replied, "I am most willing that the Church and all good Christians should pray for me."

This painful discussion has not always been rightly understood by historians. It evidently arose from a misunderstanding between Joan and her judges, which it was their place, if they had all been acting in good faith, to try and dispel; but instead of that they seemed purposely to confuse her. Assuredly no theologian could have blamed Joan for having had visions. The history of the Saints is filled with instances similar to those for which she vouched. They reproached her for not allowing the Church to be the judge of the true character of the visions she professed to have seen, whereas she by no means refused to do so; indeed she could not refuse, for

what right could she claim over the Church? She merely refused to deny her own faith in the divine character of her mission; that was a simple fact which she could not retract. If, for instance, I were to see two suns in the sky, I should probably consent upon the testimony of mankind to believe that my eyes were misleading me and that there was but one. At the same time I could not say that I only saw one sun, for I saw two.

Her gaolers, the English, did not leave Joan uncared for; they sent a doctor, Guillaume de la Chambre, to visit her; but their charity was not disinterested, for according to this doctor's testimony, Warwick had said to him: "Try to cure her, for the king does not wish her to die a natural death at any price; he paid dearly enough for her and does not wish her to die except by the law and at the stake."

Two weeks later, on the 2nd May, the "public admonition," which was to succeed the "charitable exhortation" made in the prison, took place in the court-room before Cauchon, supported by sixty-three judges, and in the presence of a large audience. Cauchon began with a summary of the whole proceedings, after which Jean de Châtillon, Archdeacon of Évreux, commenced the *admonition*. "Read your book," Joan said to him, "I will answer you. In all things I put my faith in God my Creator; I love Him with my whole heart."

The *Admonition* is very long, but presents no new fact or accusation. It concluded with the same assurances of indulgence in case of submission, the same threats in case of resistance. Joan answered

in the following words: "I believe in the Church Militant, but as to my words and deeds, I refer them to God who commanded them." "Take care," replied the judges, "this is heresy, and if we declare you to be heretical other judges will condemn you to be burned." "Were the fire before my eyes, I would say everything which I have said to you, and I would say nothing more." Here on the margin we find written—*superba responsio*, which should not be translated "proud answer," but "arrogant answer." "If the Pope and the General Council were here would you submit yourself to them?" "I will say no more." "Will you submit yourself to the Pope?" "Take me to him and I will answer you." "Submit to the Church under penalty of being abandoned by the Church. If the Church were to abandon you, you would be in great peril both of body and soul, and liable to incur the torments of everlasting fire for your soul and of temporal fire for your body." "You will not do the things you threaten me with, without bringing upon yourselves evil to both body and soul."

On the 9th May, in the presence of the executioners, they threatened her with torture. "Verily," she said, "if you were to order that all my limbs should be pulled apart and my soul driven from my body, I would not tell you anything more. Or if I did tell you anything, I should always say afterwards that you had compelled me to do so." The judges then held a consultation (on the 12th May) upon the application of torture; but only three of them (Albert Morel, Thomas de Courcelles and

Nicolas Loiseleur, who seems to have been more violently disposed against the prisoner than any of them) voted in favour of it. The rest to the number of fourteen voted against it, declaring torture to be useless. One of these, Raoul Rousset, expressed this curious opinion: "The trial has been well conducted; torture would spoil it."

Cauchon, however, was anxious that this "well conducted" trial should be entirely "irreproachable."<sup>1</sup> He sent all the documents to the Paris University soliciting its support. In doing so he ran no risk of meeting with any over scrupulous fault-finders, for the Paris University was completely under English influence, and the enemies of King Henry were their enemies as well. They praised everything in the manner in which the affair had been conducted, even to the "elegance" of the report made of it by Jean Beaupère in the name of the judges of Rouen. Two separate resolutions, one of the faculty of divinity, the other of the faculty of law, resulted in a formal condemnation of the accused, with even worse insults than those with

<sup>1</sup> By the light of careful scrutiny it is very far from being so. We do not mean from the point of view of justice but merely of legality. Cauchon sent the twelve articles to the doctors of Paris without having submitted them to the accused. Nor did he insert all the corrections and restrictions requested by the judges. At the trial for rehabilitation a mass of irregular proceedings at the former trial were brought to light, but that is perhaps the most flagrant of them, for it enabled the champions of the University (with some exaggeration, we think) to maintain that that great body had been shamefully deceived by Cauchon. It should at least be admitted that the University, by its tacit but obvious complicity, allowed itself to be deceived very easily.

which the Rouen judges had loaded her. Moreover this judgment of the Paris University, pronounced in the absence of the accused and without examination or inquiry, based entirely upon documents brought from Rouen which were all hostile to Joan, and treacherously drawn up and put together so as to do her injury, is without any value. The gravest accusation one can bring against the doctors who pronounced it, is that they should have accepted such a rôle under such unfair conditions.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the approval of Paris was received at Rouen they proceeded to hold the final deliberation. Forty-two doctors declared that if the Maid did not submit she should be pronounced heretical and

<sup>1</sup> In 1429 the Paris University was entirely devoted to the Anglo-Burgundian party. It had consented to the Treaty of Troyes and had remained faithful to it. The dissentient members had been obliged to seek flight in 1418; a few of them were with Charles VII., some, like Gerson, in retreat. In other respects the temper of the University with regard to the Council of Basle had nothing to do with the condemnation of Joan of Arc. The French clergy of Henry the VI.'s party and the French clergy of Charles VII.'s party professed the same doctrines upon the powers of the Pope and of the Council. It should also be remembered, that the Council of Basle was only formed in July 1431, two months after the burning of Joan; that it did not open its session until 14th December, and that it did not become schismatical until after the assembly had been removed from Basle to Ferrara. By that time the University had been completely reconciled to Charles VII. In 1431, and in succeeding years, the Popes (Martin V. and Eugene IV.) frequently extolled the perfect orthodoxy of the Paris University. Eugene IV., when transferring Cauchon to Lisieux (29th Jan. 1432), loudly testified to his orthodoxy. Upon all these matters, refer to *Mémoires de la Société d'histoire de Paris* (le P. Denifle et Chatelain), vol. xxiv., 1897, *Jeanne d'Arc et l'Université de Paris*.



abandoned to the civil power. Five only, without daring to speak of acquittal, tried to save her by asking that a more exhaustive inquiry should be made.

On Wednesday, the 23rd May, Joan received in her prison the commission of nine judges appointed to give her the following exposition of her errors:— She maintains that her revelations are from God; the learned men declare them to be untrue or diabolical. The account she gave of her arrival in Chinon, and of the angel who accompanied her to the King is untrue. She pretends to recognise and distinguish the angels and the saints; that is presumptuous. To foretell the future; that is superstitious and boastful. To have received from God a command to wear men's clothes; that is blasphemy. She has written threatening letters; that is bloodthirsty passion. She left Domremy without a word of warning to her father and mother; that is disrespect and contempt for her parents. She leapt from the tower at Beaurevoir; that is despair and suicide. She believes that Paradise is assured to her; that is rash presumption. She declares what God loves and what God hates; that is the same sin. She believes in her voices; that is idolatry. She does not submit herself to the Church but only to God; that is schismatic. All her crimes having been read out, Pierre Maurice exhorted her for the last time before the decree was made public. The tone of this exhortation seems gentler than that of those which preceded it, and I believe that several of her judges sincerely wished

her to yield and thus escape from death, for they did not all share the violent hatred of the English and their creatures. But, such is the blindness of a prejudiced mind, her judges found her stubborn and arrogant because she refused to accede to them.

Neither threats nor persuasion had power to influence this intrepid soul, and she made this answer: "As to my speech and actions, which I declared at the trial, I refer to them and desire to uphold them. . . . Were I to see the fire blazing, the stake and the executioner; were I in the flames myself, I would not speak differently, I would hold to what I have said during the trial until death."

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ABJURATION—THE STAKE

THE trial was over; and there only now remained the final catastrophe, which was still uncertain, since there was yet time for the condemned woman to avert it. On the Thursday after Whit-Sunday, the 24th May 1431, Joan was taken out of her prison, brought to the cemetery of Saint Ouen, and placed upon a high platform at a sort of desk (*ambone*). In the presence of the Bishop of Winchester, a cardinal, and great uncle of Henry VI., of three bishops, eight abbots, two priors, nine doctors of divinity, two doctors of canon law, nine licentiates, seven bachelors, and an immense crowd of the laity (*copiosa multitudo*), Guillaume Érard preached a sermon upon the text, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine." In the middle of his sermon, he ventured to exclaim: "Ah! noble house of France, which hast ever been a defender of the faith, hast thou been so misguided as to hold with a heretic and a schismatic!"<sup>1</sup> The pity of it is great." Whereupon Joan pluckily broke in, "By my faith, sir, saving your reverence, I make

<sup>1</sup> According to Jean Massieu he had even said, "Joan, by believing in you, your king has become heretical and schismatic." The English would have liked well that this should be believed.

bold to say to you and to swear to you, under penalty of my life, that King Charles is the most noble Christian of all Christians, and the one who best loves the faith and the Church." This touching tribute rendered by a martyr to the king who had forsaken her, infuriated Cauchon. "Make her hold her tongue,"<sup>1</sup> he shouted to the guards.

When the sermon was finished, a final "exhortation" to "submit herself to the Church" was addressed to the prisoner. "As to the submission to the Church," she replied, "it is a point upon which I have spoken. *Let everything which I have said be sent to Rome and laid before the Sovereign Pontiff* to whom and to God first of all I appeal. But in regard to what I have said and done, it has all been by God's command." "Are you ready to condemn all the words and actions which the clergy condemn?" "I appeal to God and to our Holy Father the Pope." "That is not sufficient, we cannot go all that distance to find the Pope."<sup>2</sup> The bishops are judges in matters of faith, each in his own diocese." They then began to read the "triple admonition," the last thing before that final sentence by which she would be abandoned to the secular party, that is to say, to the executioner.

<sup>1</sup> According to some it was the preacher himself who silenced her.

<sup>2</sup> It does indeed seem to us to-day that it must have been a very long journey to Rome in the fifteenth century; but it cannot really have been so, for the road was well worn. Père Denifle justly observes that Rome cannot have been so far away, when every day messengers were sent there to solicit favours. (*Jeanne d'Arc et l'Université de Paris* in the *Revue de l'histoire de Paris*, vol. xxiv., 1897).

As the last act of the drama approached the excitement increased, and the crowd became unmanageable. People shouted and threw stones. Judges and populace entreated or railed at the accused. "Sign immediately or be burnt immediately!"<sup>1</sup> urged Énard the preacher, in threatening tones.

And then, facing the stake which was ready to blaze up, and the crowd of foes and friends who, angrily or in pity, were urging her to recant; worn out, paralysed almost by the long imprisonment, by the chains, the insults, the threats, the brutality, by sickness, by the mental torture of thirty cross-examinations, by the exhausting fatigue of a trial which had lasted for a hundred and fourteen days, this girl of nineteen became frightened. May the shame of it be visited upon her judges and executioners!

She said: "I wish to maintain everything which the Church shall command. I refer myself to our Holy Mother the Church and to the judges." They handed her a form of abjuration which had been prepared beforehand. The form of abjuration which appears in the report of the trial is very long, and disavows Joan's entire mission in terms most insulting to her; the text which they read to her, and which they made her repeat word for word, was, on the contrary, very short. (All the witnesses confirm this, and say that the document contained from six to eight lines.)<sup>2</sup> Joan, however, who could not read,

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Jean Massieu, usher at the trial, and of Guillaume de la Chambre.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Jean Massieu, usher at the trial, who states

was unable, especially at such a moment, to make sure of the exact text which they made her sign by affixing a cross and a circle.

The abjuration, as it was transcribed into the official report of the trial, retracted and denied everything which she had said upon the score of her mission. The pertinacity of her judges triumphed at last over the firmness she had shown so long. The final sentence was immediately read to her, for a form of absolution and one of condemnation had been prepared beforehand to be ready for any emergency.<sup>1</sup> Joan was absolved, and her excommunication was annulled; but as a punishment for her sins she was condemned to imprisonment for life "on the bread of adversity and the water of affliction," so that she might weep over those things which she had done, and might "no longer do things for which she would be obliged to weep" (*ut commissa defleas et deflenda postea non committas*).

During the afternoon Joan was visited in her prison by the Inquisitor and several of the judges. They ordered her to resume her woman's clothes; to which she replied that in that and in all things she would obey the Church. On the very same day she explicitly, "that the form put in at the trial was not the one which he had himself read to Joan, and which she had signed."

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Guillaume Manchon, reporter at the trial. He says that Joan smiled while signing the deed of abjuration. If this fact be true, it should be explained by her intense weariness and the exhausted state of her nervous system rather than by imputing to her a wish to mock her judges and deny her retraction. It may have been this smile, however, which caused some Englishmen to exclaim, "The abjuration is not serious." See below, p. 147.

laid aside the man's dress she had been wearing for twenty-seven months. Her hair was cut round the level of her neck, which was the usual style among men of the period. She submitted to have her head shaved, and no doubt she donned a coif like those worn by nuns.

The question arises, had Cauchon foreseen or desired such a result? The evidence seems conflicting; but if we examine it carefully, we shall see that it is really consistent. A learned doctor who was present at the abjuration, an Englishman, said sharply to Cauchon: "An abjuration like that is valueless, and should not be accepted." Cauchon, losing his temper, replied: "You lie!<sup>1</sup> I am judge in matters of faith; I must seek the salvation of the sinner, not her death!"

One witness,<sup>2</sup> however, tells us that after the abjuration the infuriated English shouted to the judges: "You have not earned your money"; and that one of these answered: "Never fear, we shall get her back." (*Rehabebimus.*)

Could this judge have been Cauchon himself? It seems scarcely probable, though, according to very trustworthy evidence,<sup>3</sup> Cauchon three days later, when he had satisfied himself that Joan had resumed her men's clothes, was seen in the midst of the English evincing every sign of triumphant satisfaction, and was heard to cry to Warwick and others:

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Guillaume du Desert, canon, at the rehabilitation trial.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Jean Favé.

<sup>3</sup> Evidence of Isambard de la Pierre.

"We have her!" (or, "be of good cheer"). "It is done."<sup>1</sup>

These diverse testimonies can easily be reconciled. Cauchon was not sorry that Joan should be absolved after she had retracted, provided that she was soon retaken and condemned. In this way he was able to reconcile, with an appearance of impartiality, the satisfaction he felt at having in the end forced Joan to disown her mission, the pleasure he took in a personal revenge, and the reward which he hoped to receive from the English for his services. It is certain that the English were determined upon the prisoner's death. Several witnesses asserted at the rehabilitation trial that the English soldiers even refused to resume the campaign and besiege Louviers so long as the Maid was alive.

And yet the life which was left to her was worse than death. She was kept in prison, in chains, and at the mercy of coarse and cruel men who regretfully renounced the pleasure of seeing her burned, and did not hesitate to tell her so. She may possibly have overheard the judges bidding her gaolers to be patient a little longer. At any rate the words were justified by the event. On Sunday afternoon a rumour spread abroad, that in spite of the command she had received, and of the promise she had made, Joan had once more returned to her masculine attire. She had "relapsed," and nothing now could save her.

The same day some of the judges hastened to the castle. The English stopped them in the

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Jean Toutmouillé, a preaching friar.



courtyard, and covered them with insults. "You Churchmen, you are all Armagnac traitors and false counsellors." They had great difficulty in escaping, and when they returned on the following day they were escorted by Cauchon, and under the protection of the Earl of Warwick's men-at-arms. When they reached the prison they found Joan dressed as a man.

What had occurred? Although the evidence seems contradictory we think it can be reconciled. That a trap was set for Joan's undoing is perfectly true; but we believe that she fell into it of her own accord and preferred to die rather than to persist in her apostasy.

The story told at the rehabilitation trial by that honest man, Jean Massieu, a priest who had done duty as usher during the previous trial, and had ever been lenient in his treatment of Joan, is well known. He stated that the man's costume (laid aside by her on the preceding Thursday) had been put into a bag and kept in the room where she was imprisoned. She was guarded by five Englishmen, three of whom spent the night in the room and two just outside, by the door. In the bed in which she lay "her legs were fettered by two pairs of iron chains, and she was very tightly bound by a chain which passed through the legs of the bed, and was attached to a huge block of wood five or six feet in length and fastened with a padlock; she could not therefore move from her place." On Sunday morning (Trinity Sunday, 27th May), wishing to get up, as she told the witness himself (Jean Massieu), she said to these Englishmen, her guards,

"Loose my chains, and I will get up." Then one of the Englishmen took away the woman's dress she had on her (that is to say, lying upon the bed), and the others emptied the bag in which was the suit of men's clothes, threw the said clothes upon her, saying, "Get up," and concealed the woman's dress in the bag. She refused, saying: "It is forbidden me, I will not take it." The struggle lasted for several hours, until the middle of the day. At length yielding to necessity, and still protesting, she put on the suit of men's clothes.

The whole of this tale is substantially true, and if for three days they kept in her room the suit of clothes which under penalty of death she was never to wear again, it is most probable that it was with the intention of setting a trap for her. But I am inclined to think that she allowed herself to fall into the trap partly of her own free will. Against this testimony we have to set that of Martin Ladvenu, her last Confessor, that of Isambard de la Pierre, who, with Martin Ladvenu, ministered to her at the stake, and that of Jean Toutmouillé, a preaching friar who visited her in her prison. These all declared upon Joan's own authority that she had been obliged to defend herself against the insults of one of her guards, or perhaps even of a far greater personage, and that it was for this reason she put on the man's clothing, which with treacherous intent had been left within her reach. Jean Toutmouillé saw her in her prison, "weeping, her face bathed in tears, so disfigured and abused that she inspired him with pity and compassion."

We now come to the official version put forth by the judges.<sup>1</sup> On Monday, 28th May, eight of the judges repaired to the prison where they found Joan attired in men's clothes. She declared to them that she had put them on of her own accord without any pressure having been brought to bear. She denied that she had sworn never to put them on again. It was more seemly that she should wear men's clothes since she was made to live among men; they had not kept the promises they had made to her, that she should attend Mass, receive the Body of our Lord, and be released from her chains. Let them take her to Mass and permit her to have a woman with her, let them give her "a pleasant prison" (without chains), and she would be good and do whatever the Church required. The judges asked her, "Had she heard her voices again?" "Yes." "What had they said to her?" "God had sent her word through St Catherine and St Margaret how great a pity it was that she had consented to the treachery of abjuring in order to save her life, and that in this way she was damning herself!"<sup>2</sup> If she said that God had not really sent her she would be damned. For God had truly sent her. Whatever she had said and revoked on the

<sup>1</sup> Official in the sense that it was drawn up under the auspices of the judges and annexed to the report of the trial, though not till after the event. It does not form a part of the documents of the case, and it does not pledge the professional responsibility of the notaries.

<sup>2</sup> In the margin of the three authentic copies we read these words which must apparently have been reproduced from the no longer extant original: *Responsio mortifera* (a fatal reply). And

preceding Thursday had been said or revoked from fear of the fire." "Then she believed that the voices were those of St Catherine and of St Margaret?" She replied, "Yes, I believe it, and the voices come from God. I would much prefer to undergo my punishment once for all (that is, to die) than stay any longer in prison."

Contrary to the opinion of many historians, we think that this official account is truthful; and we believe that we can recognise in it the language and the feelings of Joan of Arc. After an hour of weakness she recovered herself, and then of her own accord recalled a retraction which had been forced from her by surprise and violence. She accepted death, but in dying she would still be able to say, "My voices came from God."

On the following day, Tuesday, 29th May, the Court re-assembled in the chapel of the archbishop's palace. There were present thirty-seven judges, and Cauchon set the facts before them. Joan was unanimously condemned. She was declared to have relapsed into heresy, and it was ordered that she should be given over to the secular power. Even Isambard de la Pierre and Martin Ladvenu, who on the morrow were to soothe her last hours with pious counsel and human sympathy, did not consider that they could withhold their votes from those who were condemning her. There are evil moments in

indeed we do not doubt that, when she made this declaration and repeated it, Joan knew quite well that she was sealing her doom, and wished to do so, "in order that by destroying her body she might save her soul."

which the most humane become merely the least savage. And so, on this last day, some did not even wish that the form of abjuration should be re-read to her; others, and they were in the majority, insisted that it should be read to her, but only "for the good of her soul," since, being a backslider, she was no longer capable of abjuring: her body was irrevocably doomed. Several of the judges (but these were in a minority) did not wish that the civil power should be requested to show tenderness towards her; others wished to affix to the sentence this formula, which, however, was absolutely idle, for the civil power never paid the slightest attention to it.

At dawn on Wednesday morning, 30th May, Pierre Cauchon and the Inquisitor summoned Joan to appear in the Square of the Old Market at eight o'clock in the morning, there to be declared a backslider, an excommunicate and a schismatic. Jean Toutmouillé, a preaching friar, and Martin Ladvenu were the first to reach the prison, and it was Jean Toutmouillé who was entrusted with, or who took upon himself, the duty of announcing to Joan that she was about to die. "She began to moan sorrowfully and pitifully, and writhe and tear her hair.<sup>1</sup> 'Alas! do they treat me so horribly and cruelly that my body which is quite pure and never was corrupted must to-day be consumed and reduced to ashes. Oh! I would rather be decapitated seven times than burned like this. Alas! if I had been in the ecclesiastical prison, to which I submitted myself, and if I had been guarded by the clergy, and not by

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Jean Toutmouillé.

my enemies and adversaries, such terrible misfortune would not have befallen me. Oh! I appeal to God, the great Judge, against the great wrongs which they do to me.' She then complained grievously of the persecution and harsh treatment she had undergone in prison, from her gaolers and others who had been brought to her. After these complaints the aforesaid bishop (Cauchon) came in, to whom she at once said, 'Bishop, my death is at your door!' He began to remonstrate with her, saying: 'Ah, Joan, be patient. You die because you did not hold to what you promised us, and because you returned to your original witchcraft.' And the poor Maid made answer, 'Alas! if you had placed me in the prison of the Church Court, and put me into the hands of legal and proper ecclesiastical guardians, this would never have occurred. That is why I appeal from you to God.'"

As it happened, all those who were present during the last hour she spent in prison were her enemies; at any rate they were the judges who had condemned her, and may therefore be justly suspected of having been interested in ascribing weakness to her. What then are we to think when they unanimously declared that on that last morning she said to them, "My voices deceived me." An avowal like this is such a contrast to the firmness which is recognised in her by all those who witnessed her martyrdom and admired the heroism she displayed at the stake, that the witnesses of the scene in the prison have frequently been accused of lying. Probably they were only guilty of exaggerating the import of a

concession which she made to them. Perhaps the account of Jean Toutmouillé, the preaching friar, may give us some clue to the truth. According to him, Cauchon had said to Joan, "Come now, Joan, you have always told us that your voices assured you that you would be saved, and now you see how they have deceived you; come, tell us the truth!" And Joan had replied, "*Yes, indeed, I see full well that they have deceived me.*" What can have been the real meaning of these words, supposing them to be authentic? She could not have meant to say that the voices did not come from God, for shortly afterwards she died declaring that "they came from God." What she meant was this—"I did not understand them, I thought that they promised that I should be saved, and I see that I am about to die." "But were these voices good or evil?" insisted Cauchon. "I appeal to my mother the Church" (or, according to another version, "to you who are Churchmen").<sup>1</sup> Certainly this was no disavowal of her mission; but she was weary of wrangling, and now that the end had drawn so near, she wished her thoughts to dwell on God alone and allowed men to believe whatever they pleased about her.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Evidence given by Nicolas de Venderes, Martin Ladvenu, Pierre Maurice, Jean Toutmouillé, Jacques Lecamus, Thomas de Courcelles and Nicolas Loiseleur. She acknowledged that the angel who had brought the crown to Chinon "was none other than herself," and confessed that there had been no crown except the promise of the coronation.

<sup>2</sup> This, we believe, is the conclusion to be drawn from the trustworthy evidence. We do not include that of Nicolas Loiseleur,

She fervently desired to partake of the Body of her Lord before going to her death; and in order that her judges might grant her this favour, which on principle was refused to unrepentant backsliders, it was necessary to conciliate them by words, which they might, in strictness, interpret as a final concession. With Cauchon's permission, Martin Ladvenu confessed her and afterwards administered to her the Holy Communion. "The Body of our Lord<sup>1</sup> was irreverently brought to her without candles or lights of any kind, and without a procession; and the priest who carried it had on neither surplice nor stole." Brother Martin was incensed at this, and sent back for candles, a surplice and a stole. The condemned woman "received the Communion most devoutly, shedding copious tears." It was then, no doubt, that she said to Pierre Maurice, "Master Pierre, where shall I be to-night?" "Have you not firm trust in God?" "Yes, yes, and by God's grace I shall be in Paradise."

Towards eight o'clock in the morning the melancholy procession set forth from the prison and the castle. Joan of Arc had been dressed in a long white robe falling to her feet, and upon her head was set a sort of mitre bearing this inscription, "Heretic, backslider, apostate, idolatress." A hundred and twenty men,<sup>2</sup> some armed with swords, some with that perfidious and bitter enemy who (alone among all the witnesses) had the audacity to state that Joan showed profound contrition for all the wrongs she had wickedly done the English and Burgundians. More bare-faced lying it would be impossible to imagine.

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Jean Massieu who was present.

<sup>2</sup> According to other authorities, who probably exaggerated,



clubs, formed an escort for the condemned woman. An immense crowd had already gathered in the Square of the Old Market. Joan was first exposed to view as on the preceding Thursday, upon a raised platform so that everyone might see her. A board fastened to the scaffold bore this inscription : “ Joan who called herself the Maid, liar, worker of mischief, deceiver of the people, soothsayer, believer in superstitions, blasphemer of God, presumptuous disbeliever in the faith of Jesus Christ, boaster, idolatress, cruel, dissolute, invoker of evil spirits, apostate, schismatic, heretic.” Nicolas Midi preached a sermon on the text (1st Corinthians, chap. xii.)—“ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.” Joan was this diseased member that must be severed from the body. She was then bidden to consider the salvation of her soul, and to listen devoutly to the preaching friars who were ministering to her. They dwelt upon her crimes, her abjuration and her vain-glorious retraction, and finally declared her to be a heretic and a backslider, cut her off from the Church and abandoned her to the secular authorities<sup>1</sup>

there were seven or eight hundred. Pierre Boucher says that there were ten thousand spectators at her death, but that number seems excessive, the Square was not large enough.

<sup>1</sup> These are the last lines of the sentence of excommunication : “ That after such an abjuration of your errors you have fallen once more (Oh ! the pity of it !) into the same aforesaid crimes, like the dog that returns to his vomit, is sufficiently and manifestly apparent from your confessions and spontaneous declarations. We consequently declare you to be a heretic and a backslider, and lest, like a rotten member, you should equally infect all the other members, we pronounce that you be cast out from the unity of the Church and abandoned to the secular power ; praying the

"with the request that they would deal mercifully with her and moderate her sentence, not going to the length of death or mutilation of her members, and requesting that, if she showed any true signs of repentance, the Sacrament of Penance should be administered to her."

Vain forms! They granted "the Sacrament of Penance" on condition that she showed unequivocal signs of remorse, to one who less than an hour before in the prison had received not only absolution, but the Sacrament of Communion. At the same time they prayed the secular power to spare the body of the culprit, although it was understood beforehand that the civil judge would pay no attention to the request.

The official report of the trial ends with the formula of excommunication, after which there is only the certificate of authenticity signed by the three clerks. The rest did not concern the Church, and no official record of it has survived.

When the formula of excommunication had been pronounced, the ecclesiastical judges withdrew, their duties being over. Then a most atrocious, monstrous and absolutely illegal thing took place. The bailiff, a secular judge called Jean le Bouteiller, was present, surrounded by his assistant judges, and it was his place to decide upon the fate of the girl whom the Church had abandoned. This tool of the King of

said secular power to moderate its judgment towards you, stopping short of death or the mutilation of your body, and to allow the Sacrament of Penance to be administered to you if you should show true signs of penitence."

England was in such a hurry to get the matter over that he forgot that he ought to make some pretence of judging or at least condemning Joan before burning her, but merely said to the executioner: "Proceed with your duties." And Joan of Arc was burned without any death sentence having been passed upon her.<sup>1</sup>

Two sergeants conducted Joan to the stake which had already been erected, and had been raised to an exceptional height so that she might be seen from a distance, or in order to prolong her sufferings; for the higher the pile the longer it took the flames to reach and suffocate the victim. Let us, however, leave the task of describing this wonderful death to those who witnessed it. They were all of them more or less inimical to Joan; for this very reason their testimony seems the more eloquent.

"At the last," says Isambard de la Pierre, "Joan was overcome with such great remorse and repentance that it was something wonderful to see, and gave utterance to such devout, pathetic and Catholic words, that all the great multitude who beheld her wept bitterly. So much so that the English cardinal and many other English were constrained to weep and feel compassion for her." And so all the spectators wept, and the tears of most of them were sincere. For human nature is so constructed that it can feel moved to pity by sufferings for which it is itself responsible, and so finds a sweetness in its tears which drives away remorse.<sup>2</sup> "And the un-

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Isambard de la Pierre.

<sup>2</sup> Guillaume Manchon, clerk at the trial, testifies to these tears;

happy woman humbly begged and entreated Brother Isambard, as he stood near her at the end, to go to the church close by and bring her the cross, so that he might hold it straight before her eyes until death came. An Englishman made a little wooden cross out of two sticks, and gave it to her. She took it, pressed her lips devoutly upon it, and put it in her bosom underneath her dress and against her body. Then the Clerk of St Saviour brought her the cross from the church, which, when it was brought to her, she embraced long and closely, and kept until she was bound to the stake."<sup>1</sup>

The English, meanwhile, were becoming impatient at the delay, although, according to the statement of Jean Massieu, not more than half an hour elapsed between the abandonment of the condemned to the civil power and her death. The English commanders shouted to the Confessor: "Come, priest, would you have us dine here?" They appeased them by lighting the fire. Joan kept up a continuous murmur of "Jesus, Jesus," protesting that she was neither heretical nor schismatical. Seeing that Isambard de la Pierre and Martin Ladvenu<sup>2</sup> remained by her side as the flames began to ascend, she became alarmed for their safety, and implored them to go down, only entreating them to hold the cross before her eyes. "Until the last she declared that her voices came from God, and had not deceived her; he himself could not stop crying for a month. With part of the money he had made out of the trial he bought a little missal which he still had (1455), so that he might pray for her."

<sup>1</sup> *Estache*, i.e. *poteau* (stake). Evidence of Jean Massieu.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Isambard de la Pierre and Martin Ladvenu.

that her revelations came to her from God: and that everything she had done she had done by the command of God.”<sup>1</sup>

And so, whatever may have been the text and purport of the words dragged from her that morning in the prison (words which were the cost paid by her for the joy of receiving the Body of her Lord), it is clear from positive evidence that at the last hour, transported by the efficacy of the holy Sacrament and by the approach of her martyrdom, wherein faith taught her to see her triumph, at this last hour she became herself again; she saw the heavens open, and she vindicated her voices: “No, my voices did not deceive me.” At the first gleam of the burning faggots the martyr understood. The salvation promised to her by the voices was the Paradise which was opening to her ravished gaze. The ignoble death was the consecration of her mission. Following in the footsteps of her Divine Saviour she triumphed in death.

“In the midst of the flames she never once ceased confessing in a loud voice the holy name of Jesus, continually imploring and invoking the help of the Saints in Paradise; and, finally, as she breathed her last, and bowed her head, she uttered the name of Jesus in so loud a tone that this last cry was heard at the further end of the Square.”<sup>2</sup>

As soon as she had expired, the English caused

<sup>1</sup> See the explicit evidence of Manchon on this very important point.

<sup>2</sup> Evidence of Isambard de la Pierre, Jean Massieu, Leparmentier and Jean Riquier.

the fire to be scattered so as to disperse the smoke and allow everyone to see that she was actually dead and had not been permitted to escape. "Immediately after the execution, the executioner came to the two monks who had ministered to her, overcome by a marvellous repentance and terrible remorse, fearing in his despair that he would never be able to obtain pardon and mercy from God for what he had done to this holy woman. Four hours after nones he still maintained that he had never dreaded any execution so much; firstly, because of the great renown and fame of this woman, and secondly, because of the cruel way of binding and exposing her. For the English had had so lofty a scaffold constructed that he could not easily reach her or despatch her, on which account he grieved sorely and was full of pity for the cruel manner in which they had made her die."<sup>1</sup> In like manner Jean Tressart, secretary to the King of England, displayed great sorrow and deep emotion on returning from the execution. "We are lost," he groaned, "we have burned a saint."<sup>2</sup> One of the English soldiers had taken an oath to add a faggot to the pile. He carried out his intention, but, on hearing Joan of Arc cry "Jesus," he became dumbfounded, fainted away, and was carried to a tavern close to the Old Market to be revived. Another declared that when Joan expired he had seen a dove fly away from the

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Martin Ladvenu.

<sup>2</sup> *Bonam sanctam personam* (Evidence of Pierre Cusquel). "I would that my soul were where I believe the soul of that woman to be," said the canon Jean Alépée (Evidence of Jean Riquier).

stake.<sup>1</sup> And so it came to pass that the hard hearts of some of her enemies were moved to a little pity at the sight of her martyrdom! The crime was, nevertheless, carried out to the bitter end. Joan's ashes, with her heart and entrails (which, according to the statement of the executioner, had not been consumed), were thrown into the Seine along with the remains of the stake.

We must not, indeed, as has frequently been done, exaggerate the repentance of her enemies. For having presumed to say that she had not been properly judged, a Dominican friar was obliged to retract his words, humbly beg for mercy, and consider himself lucky to get off with a year's imprisonment on a diet of bread and water.

In the course of the month of June, King Henry VI. officially notified the condemnation and death of Joan of Arc to the Emperor, to the Christian kings, dukes and princes throughout Europe, to the prelates, dukes, counts and other nobles of France, and to every city in France. The University of Paris announced the same event to the Pope and the cardinals, being careful to assure the Holy Father (which was a lie) that Joan had refused to submit to any established authority, even to the highest such as the Council, and had declared that she recognised no other judge but God. The letter to the Pope concluded in the following manner:—

“By the issue of these events a striking lesson has been given to everybody. Everybody most clearly realised how dangerous and terrible a mistake it

<sup>1</sup> Evidence of Isambard de la Pierre.

would be thoughtlessly to put too much faith in these new-fangled conceits, which not only the said woman, but also many other women in this most Christian kingdom, have lately been spreading abroad. And by this notable example all the faithful followers of the Catholic religion should be warned not to think too highly of their own opinions, but that they should cling to the doctrines of the Church and the teachings of their prelates, rather than to the fables of superstitious women. For if, through our failings, the day shall ever come when the people in their levity shall listen to soothsayers falsely prophesying in God's name, instead of to the priests and doctors of the Church to whom Christ said, 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations,' then will religion forthwith perish, faith will decay, the Church will be trampled under foot, and the iniquity of Satan will reign over the whole world."

There is no doubt a certain amount of affectation, not to say hypocrisy, in this epistle, and yet it shows us that the fears and scruples which were only simulated by some of the judges, were not simulated by all. Let us deal frankly with this delicate point.

That the trial of Joan of Arc was not honest, has been clearly enough proved by the evidence in the trial for rehabilitation. The weight of power against her was scandalous. The English wished at all costs to compass the death of the Maid, and the Chief of the Court was her personal enemy. Yet it was not solely to obey the English and gratify Cauchon that so many doctors condemned Joan of Arc. They were not all of them merely bribed;



several honestly believed that the firmness of the accused was an obstacle to the Church's authority. Cauchon very cleverly convinced the credulous by this argument, just as he employed other means to win over the more astute. Every kind of means was used to destroy the victim: money, threats, promises, corruption, and even conscientious scruples. The judges were not all equally infamous; several of them were merely blinded by prejudice. This, perhaps, does not go far towards redeeming the dignity of human nature, but it is only right that we should admit the slightly extenuating circumstances.

## CHAPTER X

### THE REHABILITATION

WHO can say how many years it takes for prejudiced eyes, blinded by pride, hatred, self-interest, or merely by ignorance, to become once more open to the light of truth? One would have thought that on the very day after Joan's death the emotion caused by the martyrdom of this girl of nineteen would have been sufficient to arouse on her behalf a universal feeling of pity and admiration. Yet nothing of the sort occurred! For a long time she remained, for the whole of Europe, a subject of scandal and of angry disputes, and, as a German theologian, Jean Nider, remarks, all the learned men were divided in their opinions about her.<sup>1</sup> This, alas, is not the first or the only occasion on which the truth has been revealed to the many simple folk and hidden from the wise.

Among all the diverse opinions expressed upon

<sup>1</sup> He himself is inclined to believe, on the authority of the Paris theologians, that she was a witch inspired by the devil; and therefore, since she refused to confess and show detestation of her error, he thought her death was just. Antonin de Forciglioni, Archbishop of Florence, thought quite otherwise. He believed that she had been guided by the spirit of God, for he saw nothing evil in her actions and nothing suspicious in her doctrine.

Joan of Arc by her contemporaries, the most interesting is undoubtedly that of the future Pope Pius II (Æneas Silvius Piccolomini) inserted in his *Mémoires*, which, though nominally by a secretary, were really composed by himself and were completed in 1463. The opinion is expressed at great length,<sup>1</sup> and I quote only the more remarkable passages, translating as accurately as possible the elegant Latin of Pius II.

“So long as she was alive, even as a prisoner, the English, who had been so often defeated by her, did not feel safe. They dreaded her spells and desired her death. As soon as the judges had ascertained that she had once more put on men’s clothing they condemned her to be burned as one who had relapsed, and, in order that her ashes might not be honoured, they caused them to be thrown into the Seine.

“Thus died Joan of Arc, an admirable and wonderful virgin, after having saved the kingdom of France, which was prostrate and on the point of being broken in pieces, and after having brought many disasters upon the English. She became a captain and lived among soldiers, but she kept her chastity; no evil rumour was ever heard against her.

“Whether the work that she did was divine or merely human I dare not decide. Some believe that

<sup>1</sup> Pius II. attaches great importance, as we have done, to the check before Paris. “The Maid’s influence waned. From that moment her name was no longer so great an object of fear to the English, or of veneration to the French.”

when the French princes were at variance with one another and unwilling to submit themselves to one leader, some one, wiser than the rest, invented this stratagem to arrest the continued success of the English. It was thought that a virgin with a divine mission would improve discipline, for what man refuses to obey God? And that is how the conduct of the war came to be entrusted to the Maid.<sup>1</sup>

“However that may be, taking into account only what is certain and remarkable, under the Maid’s guidance the siege of Orleans was raised; by her army the whole country between Bourges and Paris was compelled to submit to the king; by her advice Rheims was placed in the power of Charles VII., and the coronation was celebrated; through her daring one of the gates of Paris was burned; by her skill and energy (*industria*) the affairs of the King of France were re-established on a firm basis. All these achievements are worthy of everlasting renown, but posterity will regard them rather with wonder than with faith.”

Pius II., in these passages, defends Joan of Arc’s memory as it should have been defended. He says: “Look at the facts. The facts speak for themselves.” The same course was followed by Martin le Franc, a French poet, contemporary

<sup>1</sup> This theory (which Pope Pius II. himself rejects) is untenable. The “official” folk never ceased to oppose Joan of Arc’s mission. They received her without believing in her and after much hesitation. They followed her reluctantly and abandoned her without regret.

with Joan, who, in his poem entitled the *Champion des Dames*, was the first to venture upon a vindication of the Maid. He wrote before 1440, and his work is dedicated to the Duke of Burgundy. He is specially praiseworthy for having had the courage, fifteen years before the rehabilitation trial, to celebrate Joan's exploits, to admire her virtues and to proclaim boldly that God had been with her. The verses are indifferent, but the sentiment which inspired them is remarkable, and we pardon so loyal a Frenchman for his failings as a poet:

Mais qui, en livre ou en comment,  
Voudra ses miracles retraire,  
On dira qu'il ne se pût faire  
Que Jeanne n'eût divin esprit ;  
Qui à telles choses parfaire  
Ainsi l'enflamma et l'éprit.<sup>1</sup>

"The dames' adversary" (who opposes their "champion") insultingly replies that Joan's whole story is a "made-up trick"; that more clever folk than she had prepared the plot, and that chance did the rest. But the "champion of dames" is indignant that such evident miracles should be denied or attributed to chance.

Disent d'elle ce que voudront ;  
Ils peuvent parler ou se taire.  
Mais ses louanges ne faudront  
Pour mensonge qu'ils sachent faire.

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<sup>1</sup> Whoever in book or story would tell of her miracles must allow that Joan had a divine spirit which urged and inspired her to do such deeds.

Que t'en faut-il outre retraire ?  
 Par sa vertu, par sa vaillance,  
 En dépit de tout adversaire  
 Couronné fut le roi de France.<sup>1</sup>

"And Joan was burned at Rouen," retorted the opponent contemptuously. "Yes," replied the "champion," "but have not many saints been martyrs, and did not Jesus himself die upon the cross?"<sup>2</sup>

Nineteen years after Joan of Arc's death the proceedings for her rehabilitation were begun, the king's first warrant for the trial being dated on the 14th February 1450.

We do not deny the importance of this act of expiation. It is well that men should do what they

<sup>1</sup> Let them say what they will of her; they may speak or hold their tongues. But her praises will not cease for all the lies they know how to tell. What need is there to say more? By her courage and bravery the King of France was crowned in spite of all his enemies.

<sup>2</sup> It seems difficult to believe that another poet, a Frenchman, Martial d'Auvergne, after having given, in his *Vigiles de Charles VII.*, an otherwise favourable account of Joan's story, should have ended with these lines on the punishment the English inflicted on her:

Si firent mal ou autrement  
 Il s'en faut à Dieu rapporter,  
 Qui de tels cas peut seulement.  
 Là-sus connaître et discuter.

(Whether they did well or ill we must leave God to decide, for He alone can understand and sift such cases.)

At the same period (1461) Villon spoke more kindly of "the good Joan of Lorraine, whom the English burned at Rouen." He calls her "of Lorraine," because she came from a country which was often called *Marche de Lorraine*, though it was held of the King of France.

can to atone for the crimes they have countenanced, but we cannot here speak of Joan of Arc's "rehabilitation" with the delight and emotion which some historians seem to feel when they describe this fresh trial. It adds nothing to the victim's glory; and the honour of France stood in greater need of it than the honour of Joan of Arc.

Nevertheless the rehabilitation trial is interesting because of the fresh light it throws upon Joan's history. The judges at the former trial had disregarded or been ignorant of many precious details which were now disclosed by a number of witnesses from Domremy, Vancouleurs, Orleans, Paris and Rouen. These details add new features to the portrait of our heroine. Many good people<sup>1</sup> came to give their evidence at this trial which was to vindicate her memory; people whom she had met with during her short life, companions of her childhood or of her warlike exploits, from the little shepherd of Domremy to the great Dunois. All these came, filled with admiration, enthusiasm and pity, to speak about her and to tell what they knew and had seen; and it is a pleasure to read their touching, simple, generous words.

But when we come to the evidence of Joan's former judges and of the learned men who agreed to

<sup>1</sup> Hauviette, now the wife of one Gérard, and Mengette, now the wife of one Joyart, companions of her childhood, who had often spun at the wheel with her (it was Hauviette who had wept so bitterly when she learned that Joan had left without her knowledge and without having said good-bye); and Simonin Musnier, a boy of her own age, whom she had visited, nursed and comforted when he was ill.

her condemnation, and witness their posthumous pity, the excuses by which they endeavour to screen themselves, and the pains they nearly all take to show that they had been deceived or coerced, the reading of the interminable report of the trial becomes a painful task.

The first trial, we agree, had been an iniquitous proceeding, and among the many proofs which might be furnished of that fact, not the least striking is to be found in those "letters of indemnity"<sup>1</sup> which the judges had procured from the King of England on the 12th June 1431; for judges whose consciences are easy require no such protection from the government, or if they do, it is because they have pronounced judgment according to orders received. But when the surviving judges tried to make out at the rehabilitation enquiry in 1455 that the former trial had been a simple fraud from beginning to end, of which they had been the first dupes, we fear that in their own interests they slightly exaggerated the facts. For, in 1431, there were so many doctors at Rouen and in Paris who approved of the sentence! It had been proclaimed to the world at large, and no protest had been raised. The truth is, as we have said, that for a time after her death everybody was ashamed of Joan of Arc. The English and their allies were ashamed of having been beaten by her, and the French were ashamed of having been saved by her.

<sup>1</sup> The text of these letters is curious, and proves clearly the apprehensions of the judges when they reflected upon possible changes of fortune and revulsions of public feeling.



Twenty years later the situation was reversed; the English had been driven from France, Charles VII. was all powerful, and England was wasted by civil war. Then it was that the forgotten figure of Joan of Arc was revived in the memories of the French; a figure exalted, purified and associated now with the wonderful spectacle which they witnessed of their native land at last recovered from the enemy. Then it was that remorse for the abandonment of Joan was awakened in the heart of Charles VII. Proceedings for her rehabilitation were decided upon and energetically pushed forward; and so, just as her temporary defeat twenty years before had seemed to condemn her, she was now vindicated by this final victory.

From this moment it was the interest of everybody (including the king himself) on all sides, whether at Court, in the army, in the Church, at Rouen (which had become French once more), or in Paris (which had become Royalist again), to reduce the number of those to whom the guilt of the judicial murder of Joan of Arc would have to be attributed, and to encourage the belief that all the others had been shamefully deceived by those who had managed the affair. And the task would be all the easier, if it could be made out that the few real culprits had already gone down into their graves. Cauchon, who had become a scapegoat for the sins of many, had been dead for eight years, and Jean Lemaître, the Inquisitor, had sunk into such complete obscurity that no one knew whether he was alive or dead. In this way a fictitious account of the trial might be given,

resolving it into a duel between Cauchon and Joan of Arc, and Cauchon's old accomplices might come to the new trial, with tears in their eyes, to bear witness to the Maid's virtues. In just the same way, under the Restoration, the old Terrorists, after carefully washing their blood-red hands, threw the entire responsibility for the Terror upon three or four dead men, and shed tardy tears of useless pity over the graves of the victims.<sup>1</sup>

We do not suggest that Cauchon and those honest or merely servile spirits who shared his rancour did not resort to strong measures with the judges in order to obtain Joan's condemnation. All the witnesses declare, and the judges themselves un-animously confess (in 1456) that the pressure brought to bear upon them throughout the trial was incessant, violent and shameful. We merely express the opinion that the excuse is a shameful one, and that prolonged compliance like theirs cannot be judged so leniently as we would judge an act of weakness extorted from an honest man surprised by a sudden threat of death. Joan's judges had five months in which to recover their independence of mind, and, after all, it cannot be said that the knife was at their throats on the day they condemned her. We do not deny that the judges were threatened, scolded, even coerced

<sup>1</sup> There were, however, some exceptions to the general feeling of pity. Nicholas Caval, for example, said: "I only know one thing, and that is she was burned. As to whether that was just or unjust, I refer to the trial." For evidence of this plan of representing the judges as deceived by a plot contrived by three or four see especially Quicherat, *Procès*, etc., vol. ii. p. 257.

by force.<sup>1</sup> Jean de la Fontaine was roughly treated by the English. Jean Lohier believed that his life was in danger and fled from Rouen.<sup>2</sup> Pierre Minier and Isambard de la Pierre were insulted and threatened. Nicholas de Houpeville was put in prison and then expelled from the town. According to this man's evidence, the Vice-Inquisitor himself was very frightened. Jean de Châtillon, having complained that the trial was not being conducted impartially, was requested not to appear in court again. "Everybody trembled before Cauchon," said Jean Massieu, whom the terrible Bishop of Beauvais had one day threatened "to

<sup>1</sup> See the evidence of Guillaume Manchon, Nicholas de Houpeville, Jean Massieu and others. There are, however, other witnesses (less numerous, it is true) who contradict this. Nicholas Taquel declares that he never saw anyone ill-treated. If we can believe Thomas Marie, many judges were afraid, but many were bribed. Bribed they certainly were and handsomely. The King of England paid all expenses and did not spare his money. For a hundred and fifty-three days spent in the king's service "in the matter of the Maid," Cauchon received seven hundred and sixty-five livres (five livres or a hundred sous a day). The Paris doctors summoned to Rouen for the trial were allowed twenty sous a day until their return to Paris. The Inquisitor received twenty gold pieces for his attendance at the trial. The intrinsic value of a livre of 1431 is eight francs and forty-one and three-quarters centimes. But the value of precious metals (even taking the value of silver to be fifteen and a half times less than that of gold, though the real value is much less) was at least six or seven times greater in 1431 than it is to-day; and consequently a livre of 1431 corresponds to fifty-five francs of our present money. Cauchon received from the English a salary of eight thousand francs a month. He was worth it.

<sup>2</sup> This is related by contemporaries as a fact. Père Denifle questions it (*Jeanne d'Arc et l'université de Paris*, 1897).

throw into the Seine." Richard de Grouchet, one of the judges, declares that his acquiescence in the sentence was wrung from him "by fear, threats and terror." But, after all, as we have said before, the knife was not at the throats; and it is the business of a judge to judge, not to tremble.

That is what has prejudiced many honest minds against the rehabilitation trial: the eagerness of the survivors to throw upon those who were dead the responsibility for the crime. To begin with, the "recitals" of the first "commission" given by Charles VII. at Rouen are curious. The king seems as if he were awakening from a long sleep, and has the appearance of having discovered for the first time in 1450, that Joan of Arc had been burned in 1431.

Whereas long ago Joan the Maid was captured and taken into custody by our former enemies, the English, and brought to this city of Rouen; and whereas they caused proceedings to be taken against her by certain persons who were thereto commissioned and deputed by themselves; and whereas in course of the said trial they made and committed several irregularities and abuses so that by means of the said trial and the great hatred which our said enemies bore towards her they caused her to be iniquitously, unjustly, and very cruelly put to death; and whereas we are desirous of learning the truth about the said trial, and about the manner in which it was conducted, etc.

Charles VII. originally intended to proceed with the rehabilitation of the Maid in his own name; and this tardy reparation he certainly owed to her. On the 14th February 1450, Guillaume Bouillé, a doctor of Paris University, was instructed to open a preliminary

inquiry at which was heard the evidence of the three priests who had visited Joan in her prison on the morning of the execution, and had followed the condemned woman to the stake: Isambard de la Pierre, Martin Ladvenu and Jean Toutmouillé. The clerk Manchon, the usher Massieu, and Jean Beaupère, one of those judges who had shown themselves most hostile to the accused, were also heard. Two years later Cardinal d'Estouteville, Archbishop of Rouen, and Jean Bréhal, Inquisitor of France, were commissioned to hold a second and formal enquiry in the course of which they took the evidence of twenty-two witnesses. But at this period the Court was becoming reconciled with England and was carrying on negotiations with a view to peace. Under these circumstances it was felt to be inconvenient that so important an affair should be carried on in the King's name, for the amnesty granted after the recapture of Normandy might thereby be compromised. The better plan seemed to be to promote an appeal on the part of Joan of Arc's family to the Pope, the judge legally qualified to decide upon a judgment given by an ecclesiastical tribunal in a matter of faith. Upon the strength of memorials<sup>1</sup> presented to the Holy See and discussed

<sup>1</sup> One of these memorials has been published, and is singularly interesting. It came from a little known person, Théodore de Lellis, one of the judges of the Rota, who became a cardinal and died in 1465 at the age of thirty-eight. The memorial takes the twelve articles of the condemnation and vigorously refutes them one by one. Upon one essential point the author replies in advance to the praises which Joan of Arc has received from some historians of the present century, praises which are not disinterested and

by his advisers, Calixtus III. favoured the request, and on the 11th June 1455, directed the Archbishop of Rheims (Jean Jouvenel des Ursins) and the Bishops of Paris and Coutances (Guillaume Chartier, brother of Alain Chartier; and Richard Olivier de Longueil, afterwards Cardinal and first President of the Court of Accounts), in concert with Jean Bréhal, the Inquisitor of France, to proceed with the revision of the trial of Joan of Arc.

The proceedings for revision were opened in Paris on the 7th November 1455, and the whole winter was spent in receiving the evidence of numerous witnesses at Rouen, Paris, Orleans, Domremy and Vancouleurs. Not a single voice dared to make itself heard against Joan of Arc, and when the enquiry was finished the materials which it had yielded towards her defence or rather towards her glorification were laid before the judges (May 1456). In the name of Joan's family her vindicators urged

which I am sure Joan herself would have rigorously forbidden. I refer to the "Submission to the Church." Several writers praise her for having obstinately refused to make submission and for wishing to be dependent solely upon her free, unfettered conscience. But this protestant before Calvin is not the real Joan of Arc. The fact is that by appealing from her judge (who was her mortal enemy) to the Pope and Council (see Examination of 17th March) Joan showed no lack of due submission. They told her that "the ordinary is sole judge in his diocese"; but the Rota judge maintains that that is derogating from apostolic authority. He adds: "Considering that they used that expression, the judges are more to blame than Joan herself." There is something ludicrous in maintaining against Rome that Joan was not orthodox, when Rome (which ought to know) declares that she always had been so,

the countless illegalities and iniquities of the first trial:—the fact that the presiding judge was her mortal enemy and should have refused to officiate; the suppression of previous evidence which was not produced at the trial obviously because it was favourable to the accused; the keeping of Joan in a lay prison both before and after judgment, whereas, being tried by the Church, she should have been in the custody of the Church; the absence of an advocate, although by the rules of the Inquisition at least one curator was allowed to an accused person who was still a minor; the treacherous character of the examinations; the intricacy and obscurity of the questions asked; the advice covertly whispered to Joan by false friends who were watching for an opportunity to ruin her; the corrections introduced into the twelve articles by the assistant judges and not transcribed by Cauchon; the fact that these twelve articles were not shown to the accused—but were nevertheless sent to the University of Paris, whose decision is nullified by this fact alone that they had no knowledge of the documents of the case, but only of this falsified summary; the fact that Joan's appeal to the Pope was disallowed while at the very same time it was pretended that she was unwilling to submit to the Church; the substitution, among the documents of the case, of a lengthy form of abjuration which Joan cannot have seen, for the form in six lines which was the only one shown to her; the incoherence and haste of the second trial which declared her a backslider for having resumed her men's clothes without investigating the

circumstances which perhaps compelled her to resume them; and finally the striking proofs which may be found throughout the whole trial of her enemies' hatred, hatred so bitter that the very instant after the Church had abandoned her to the secular power the accused was sent to the stake without having been condemned by the civil judge.

When all these iniquities of the former trial had been stated without a single voice being raised in defence of the judges, a complete summary of the affair, in the form of a treatise, was drawn up by the Inquisitor Jean Bréhal. The objects of this treatise were to enumerate the grounds for the annulment of the trial; to demonstrate the innocence of the condemned woman; and to re-establish the true doctrine of the Church upon the delicate points (especially with regard to visions and submission to the Church) which had been affected by the sentence of condemnation.

Finally, on the 7th July 1456, in the great hall of the archbishop's palace at Rouen, in the same town and not far from the very spot which had witnessed her infamous execution, the solemn judgment was delivered which reversed, annulled, struck out and entirely abolished the sentence pronounced against Joan of Arc and rehabilitated her memory.

Thus did the universal Church, through the voice of an appellate court constituted by the Pope, her supreme head, wipe out the unjust, false and iniquitous act of a local ecclesiastical tribunal. Joan had been condemned by a bishop and by theologians



whose legal right to judge her is open to question, and whose injustice, in the course of the trial which they afforded her and in the double sentence which terminated it, is manifest. From this shameful sentence she was relieved by the judgment of a superior and entirely disinterested tribunal. The king and the Pope had nothing to gain from this act of just reparation. The king recalled to everyone's memory that he had long been ungrateful, or, at any rate, forgetful; and the Pope, in quashing, after so long an interval, the unjust decision of a Church court, admitted that he had long been deceived by the false reports which the University of Paris had presented to him. All the more credit is due to them both for having thought only of justice in the rehabilitation of Joan of Arc.

Saintliness is not the privilege of any age, or sex, or profession or mode of life. Among the saints are found kings and beggars, monks and warriors, the learned and the ignorant. Some have prayed in the desert; others have borne their part in the tumult of the world. Some have concealed themselves in cloisters; others have drawn all eyes upon themselves by illustrious deeds. To those who judge by outward appearances the saints differ among themselves no less than the rest of mankind, and in the eyes of the profane it is a matter for wonder that men and women so diverse should be brought together by the common homage which is paid to all.

What, then, is the characteristic which is common to all, and which makes them saints without making them like one another? What is the necessary,

essential, invariable sign of saintliness? Is it not the ardent and unremitting desire of a human soul to accomplish within itself the divine will? That man is a saint who honestly and with all his soul and power seeks to learn what is God's will in regard to him, and who, when he has learnt it, has only one desire and thought—to do God's will, braving all things even unto death.

It is by virtue of this absolute submission to the divine will that Joan of Arc attains to saintliness. Her wonderful patriotism is of a very peculiar and rare kind, for she loved France in God. Patriotism, however, is not necessarily based upon religion. Other ages have seen noble-hearted women and heroic children giving up their lives to stay the alien invader without being animated by any religious sentiment. These were patriots without being saints. They are well worthy of our admiration, if only because they have known how to brave death; but their heroism is not saintliness. Saintliness comes from God alone.

It was in God that Joan loved France, just as so many other saints have loved the poor in God. Indeed her passionate love for France resembles that love for the poor by which so many saints have been consumed. The France of 1429 was poor among the poor;<sup>1</sup> and Joan saw "the great distress"

<sup>1</sup> Thus Martin le Franc depicts her in these beautiful lines from the *Champion des Dames* :—

Il m'est avis que je la voie,  
Elle, jadis reine puissante,  
Errant sans sentier ni sans voie,  
En habit de pauvre servante !

into which the kingdom had fallen with the same pitying eyes with which she watched the naked and famished vagrants passing along the road. Her patriotism, based upon love, was neither arrogant nor aggressive; it claimed for France neither conquests nor dominion; it ignored those delusive words, "glory" and "prowess," and was content if France should one day be at peace, happy, free, and should be restored once more to herself and to her king—and to God from whom the king held her. Joan's patriotism threatened no one; it allowed to strangers in their own countries the same rights which it claimed for Frenchmen in France. But (she said) those rights must be granted. It is God's will; and our just cause is His. Joan of Arc in fighting for France believed that she was fighting for God so long as the enemy held our soil and imposed his king upon us in place of our own. And when like hypocrites they said to her, "God does not love the English then?" she replied, "God loves the English when they are in their own country. He does not love them in this country which they have unjustly taken possession of. It is not the English that God hates, but injustice."

God is justice itself, and so Joan fought for God,

Toute couverte de ruine,  
Noire de coups et de battures,  
Criant le meurtre et la famine,  
Jetée aux pries aventures.

(I seem to see her, once a powerful Queen, wandering aimlessly without a guide, clothed like a poor serving-maid! Ruined, bruised with blows, proclaiming murder and famine, fallen upon most evil days.)

It was this France, vagrant, naked, dying, desperate, that Joan of Arc loved, comforted, revived and saved.

for the right and for France without distinguishing between these three causes. Those who have represented her as a virgin warrior, an heroic amazon, altogether misunderstood the story of her life. Joan never loved war ; she made war in obedience to God, who had pleased to choose her for that purpose. She fought with enthusiasm because she felt the breath of God upon her and rejoiced in abandoning herself to that inspiration ; but she fought without pleasure. She threw herself into twenty fights, but she never struck a single blow. Surely, then, hers was not a really warlike spirit. Gentle, humane, easily moved to tears, compassionate towards the vanquished as towards all who were afflicted, she fought as would have fought the angel who appeared to her and encouraged her in her battles ; terrible and calm, like the angel Michael, bearing in her hand the sword of God, of justice and of right. But in her heart was peace, and we can see no trace in her of the warlike frenzy which distinguishes the true soldier—frenzy with a fine flower of passion, but rooted in savagery and barbarism.

And so she deserves ever to be regarded as the incarnation of all that is purest and most blameless in patriotism, and of all that is most submissive to God and obedient to his call in saintliness. This double glory adorns her brow for all time. She loved her country even unto death ; and she gave to that love for a transitory object the sacred character of an imperishable and divine love, by indissolubly uniting God and France in the same devotedness, the same sacrifice and the same martyrdom.

## APPENDIX

### DECREE CONCERNING THE CAUSE FOR THE BEATIFICATION AND CANONISATION OF THE VENERABLE SERVANT OF GOD, JOAN OF ARC.

ON the 18th May 1869, upon the occasion of the annual festival celebrated at Orleans in honour of Joan of Arc, Mgr. Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, with twelve other bishops, addressed to the Holy Father a petition for the purpose of obtaining the canonisation of Joan of Arc. Pius IX. replied by requesting the Ordinary to proceed to a preliminary enquiry.

This was conducted at Orleans, commencing in 1874 and concluding in 1888. The results of the enquiry were laid before the Congregation of Rites at Rome on the 27th January 1894, when the vote was favourable to the introduction of the cause. On the same day His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. affixed his signature to the conclusions of the Congregation, and the following decree was published :—

*Decree concerning the Orleans cause for the Beatification and Canonisation of the Venerable Servant of God, Joan of Arc, Virgin, known as the Maid of Orleans.*

The Question being  
Should the commission for the introduction of

the cause in the circumstances and for the purpose in question be signed?

God who, as the Apostle says, "callesh those things which be not as though they were," as in former times he had, in his designs, chosen Deborah and Judith to confound the mighty, at the beginning of the fifteenth century raised up Joan of Arc to restore her country's fortunes which had been almost destroyed by the desperate war between the French and English, and at the same time to reclaim the liberty and glory of afflicted religion.

She was born in Lorraine<sup>1</sup> on the 6th February 1412, of parents who were of humble station but remarkable for their traditional piety. Trained in good morals, she was distinguished from her earliest years by every Christian virtue, and especially by the angelic chastity of her life. While still a little girl, *fearing God in the simplicity and innocence of her heart*, she assisted her parents in their rustic labours; in the house *her fingers worked the spindle*; in the fields she followed her father and sometimes willingly drove the plough. Nevertheless the pious child was daily growing in heavenly grace.

When she had attained the age of seventeen, it was made known to her through a vision from on high that she must go and seek Charles, the Dauphin of France, to reveal to him a secret which she had received from God. The good and simple maiden, sustained only by the spirit of obedience and animated by a wonderful charity, at once *put her hand*

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 3, n. 2.

*to the great work*, and having left her country and her parents and gone through the innumerable dangers by which her road was beset, appeared before the king at the town of Chinon; and with a frank and virile spirit disclosed to him, and to him alone, what she had learned from heaven. She added that she had been sent by God to deliver the besieged city of Orleans, and then to conduct the prince to Rheims where, Jesus Christ being proclaimed Supreme King of France, Charles would receive in His place coronation and the insignia of royalty. The king marvelled when he heard these things, but, in order to proceed with the greater prudence and safety in so important a matter, he sent Joan to Poitiers to be examined by a committee of most illustrious men assembled there, among them being the Archbishop of Rheims, chancellor of the kingdom, the Bishops of Poitiers and Maguelone, and eminent doctors, both of the secular clergy and of the regular clergy. All these men shortly afterwards agreed in sending Joan back with a striking testimonial addressed to the king, in which they testified to her faith, piety, simplicity and virginity, and acknowledged her divine mission.

And then, to the wonder of all beholders, this young girl, who knew the use of neither helmet nor buckler, mounted a horse, brandishing in one hand a sword and carrying in the other a standard whereon was depicted the image of the Redeemer, plunged into the fatigues and perils of war and fearlessly sprang into the midst of her enemies. It is difficult to realise her bravery in action and her patience in

bearing the insults and mockery of her foes, and the tears and fasts and prayers which she offered to God first of all to obtain the deliverance of Orleans, and then, after other victories of the French arms, when she had restored and secured the kingdom's rights, to remove from the future, with the help of God, all the dangers which threatened the public peace and prosperity or were able to disturb the religion of her ancestors.

Always accompanied by her confessor, Joan took every means to remove from the army whatever might corrupt morals or incite to evil, and had recourse to the holy priests to encourage the piety of the soldiers. But the most powerful means of all was the example of the Maid herself, who was almost angelic in the exercise of all the virtues, and especially in the love which animated her for God and for her neighbour. This love was so strong even towards enemies that not only did Joan never wound anyone with sword or lance, but, to the wonder of all who beheld her, she raised, succoured and cared for the wounded enemies whom she saw stretched upon the ground.

At last, bearing everywhere the part of an active leader, she raised the siege of Orleans and brought peace to the terrified inhabitants. To Joan should also be attributed the fact that the whole country watered by the Loire, the territory of Troyes and the city of Rheims, where at length the Dauphin Charles was solemnly crowned, returned to their allegiance to the king.

In return for so many and such great services,



all kinds of suffering were, by the will of God, who wished to prove his servant, inflicted upon the Maid. Abandoned or betrayed by her own friends, she fell into the cruel hands of her enemies, who sold her for a money price. Loaded with chains and tortured day and night in her prison in a thousand ways, she was at length, by a crowning crime, burned at the stake as one tainted with heresy and a backslider—the iniquitous sentence of judges who were in league with the schismatical Council of Basle.<sup>1</sup>

Fortified by the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, in the midst of the flames she kept her eyes fixed upon the cross, and, ceaselessly repeating the name of Jesus, won the precious death of the just. Her death, which, according to report, was signalised by heavenly prodigies, excited to such a degree the admiration of those who witnessed it that her enemies were terrified.

Several returned from this horrible spectacle striking their breasts. The executioner publicly declared the innocence of the Maid whose death he had caused. Men came to their senses, communed with themselves, and upon the very scene of the execution began to venerate the saintly character of Joan. It was to prevent the people from keeping relics of her that her ashes and her heart, which had remained untouched in the midst of the flames and from which the blood was still flowing, were together thrown into the river by her enemies.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 140, n. 1. In the text the words are: *Qui schismatico Basileæ concilio studebant.*

When Charles VII. had recovered possession of his kingdom and order had been restored in the public affairs of France, Pope Calixtus III., upon the petition of the mother and brothers of Joan herself, appointed apostolical judges to revise the trial by virtue of which the Maid had been condemned to the stake. These judges, after having heard a hundred and twenty witnesses of all ages and conditions of life, pronounced a judgment, on the 7th July 1456, by which the former sentence was annulled and the Maid's innocence was declared.

The fame of her saintliness having been confirmed during four centuries without interruption, it finally came to pass, in our own time, that the customary enquiry into this reputation for saintliness and virtue was held in the ecclesiastical court of Orleans. This enquiry having been duly carried out and forwarded to the Holy Congregation of Rites, our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII., was pleased to allow that the question as to the signature of the commission for introducing the cause of the servant of God should be submitted (and it was submitted) at the ordinary meeting of the same Holy Congregation.

Consequently, at the instance of the Right Reverend Bishop of Orleans and of the Right Reverend Arthur Captier, Superior General of the Society of St Sulpice, the postulator of the cause, and after a consideration of the letters in support written by a great number of Most Eminent and Right Reverend cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, and bishops, not only of France but of diverse distant countries, letters to which a great

many leading members of the clergy, and as it were, the entire Catholic world, have given their adherence, at the ordinary meeting of the Holy Congregation held at the Vatican on the day mentioned below, the following question was proposed for discussion by the Most Eminent and Right Reverend Cardinal Lucide-Marie Parocchi, Bishop of Albano and Reporter of the cause, namely: *Should the commission for the introduction of the cause in the circumstances and for the purpose in question be signed?*

And the said Holy Congregation, having maturely weighed all the facts and having heard the Reverend Father Augustin Caprara, Promoter of the Holy Faith, thought fit to reply: *The commission ought to be signed if it please His Holiness, 27th January 1894.*

All these things having been reported to our Holy Father Pope Leo XIII. by me, the undersigned, cardinal prefect of the said Holy Congregation, His Holiness, ratifying the rescript of the Holy Congregation, has deigned to sign with his own hand the commission for the introduction of the cause of the Venerable Servant of God, Joan of Arc, Virgin, on the same day of the same month of the same year.

CAJETAN, CARDINAL ALOISI-MASELLA,  
*Prefect of the Holy Congregation of Rites.*

VINCENT NUSSI,  
*Secretary to the Holy Congregation of Rites.*

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